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GATHERED SHEAVES.

FROM THE WRITINGS

OF THE LATE

JOSIAH COPLEY,

Author of "Gatherings in Beulah."

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO HER WHO WAS HIS COMPANION FOR NEARLY THREESCORE YEARS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE papers offered to the public in the following pages were originally contributed by the lamented author to the *Presbyterian Banner* and other periodicals, but have been thought by many friends not unworthy of preservation in a form more permanent than the pages of a newspaper, one in which, also, they might find a wider circle of readers than those for whom they were in the first instance intended.

To the author's many personal friends these pages will require no further introduction. They will be glad to have in the form of a book this memento of one so honored and beloved by all who knew him. To many more, however, a few words, by way of introducing to the reader the author's personality, will not be inappropriate. It will not, indeed, be necessary to repeat the story of Mr. Copley's life, given elsewhere with sufficient fulness. The present writer would only emphasize certain points with regard to his life and character which may add interest to these pages for the general reader.

It deserves to be noticed, in the first place, that these essays are the work of one who was, in the fullest sense, a self-made man. Of the schools, Mr. Copley, by his own experience, knew very little. His school-life ended at a time when that of most boys is only beginning. But wide and varied read-

ing, habits of the most careful observation of men and things, made him a man with whom the most highly educated found it always a satisfaction to converse, and from whom it was always possible to learn.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the author was, in the truest sense of the word, a Christian. That will be evident from every one of these pages. We may well, however, call attention to certain features in his Christian character which are revealed in these essays, and which shone out most brightly in his life.

He was, in an unusual degree, a happy—let us rather say, a joyful Christian. If I were asked to name the most prominent characteristic of his Christian life, as it appeared to those who knew him, I should say it was this Christian joyfulness. "Always rejoicing," seemed to us to be a true description of his daily life. Yet this was not because he had not experience of sorrow and trouble. Of the trials incident to this earthly life, he had his full share with others. But the source of his gladness of spirit was too deep to be disturbed by these things. His joy was not because of exemption from sorrow and pain, but because of the intense faith which he had,—not merely in the being and providence, but in the infinite goodness and love of God, in His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. That "all things work together for good to them that love God," was to him not merely an article of a creed, but a blessed fact, realized as such in a degree attained, we fear, in the experience of but few. The closing scenes of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" were often recalled to the mind of those who knew him. A few days before his departure, referring to his overflowing hap-

piness, I expressed my delight that it was given to him to tarry so long in the land of Beulah. "In Beulah!" he replied; "yes, I have been there now for more than fifty years. And yet," he added, after a pause, "even Beulah is not quite all that it is said to be; even there evil will sometimes find its way! It is not perfect yet." In the land of Beulah more than fifty years! The words were a happy summary of his long Christian life; a life not, indeed, without sorrow, yet none the less truly a long sojourn in Beulah, where the singing of birds is ever heard, and where the outlook is always toward heaven!

This of the subjective side of his character. As for that side of his life which looked worldward, it was marked by an elevated and hearty interest in everything that in any way concerned the welfare of man, either as regards this world or the next. He certainly remembered that because Christ's disciple, he was not of the world; but he did not therefore with some, apparently, conclude that with the world he had nothing to do, and lose all interest in its affairs. He was not so wrapped up in his own spiritual experiences as to have no concern in anything else, but to the latest day of his life was intensely interested in everything that had to do with the elevation of man, in art, science, and politics, as well as religion.

Yet his interest in these so-called secular things was not that of the worldly man. It had a far deeper inspiration,—even his faith that Christ had died for the world, no less truly than for the individual; that therefore this world and everything in it belonged to Christ by purchase-right; that therefore, again, it was the surest thing possible that, ac-

cording to God's promise, the kingdom of this world should yet become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and that to that end all things must be certainly conducting. Hence the depth of his interest in every new development in human history. In the astonishing political changes, the marvellous inventions and discoveries which his long life, covering nearly this whole century, had witnessed, he recognized the mighty providence of his heavenly Father, steadily fulfilling His prophetic Word, and by all these diverse means rapidly preparing the way for the final revelation of the kingdom of His Son on earth. He thus became a continual living contradiction of the mistaken notion which one sometimes meets, that one can not be a deeply spiritual man and be greatly interested in the secular side of life. In the highest type of Christian life, interest in the world is not destroyed, but is quickened and ennobled by the inspiration of conceptions and anticipations drawn from the heavenly and eternal. Of this fact the author of these papers was a most bright and happy illustration.

Would that the number of such Christians were greatly multiplied,— men and women whose pure and joyful lives are eloquent with the praise of God in Christ, and sweetly persuasive to true Christian living. And with this prayer we end our word of introduction, in the hope and belief that many will find in these pages some helpful and quickening thoughts, through which the departed, though dead, may yet speak.

S. H. Kellogg.

Allegheny, Pa., 1886.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THE paternal grandfather of the author, William Copley, was a manufacturer of woolen goods, in Leeds, England. He was a member of the Church of England; a man of large and liberal views, and in hearty sympathy with this country in its revolutionary struggles. His four sons all came to this country while young men. The two elder, John and Samuel (father of the author), came about 1792. After remaining awhile in business in Massachusetts, Samuel came to Pittsburgh, Pa., purchased some property in what is now the heart of the city; but with the expectation of returning to England, soon sold it again. He did not return, however, but engaged with his brother John in the manufacture of textile fabrics in the town of Shippensburgh, Pa. In 1796 he married Jane Sibbet, one of a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian family from the north of Ireland. Mrs. Copley was a woman of a strong religious character, and it is to her teachings and example that much of the pure Christian sentiment of the author may be traced. He often referred to her teaching and her beautiful life, and always with the deepest reverence and affection.

In an unpublished sketch of his mother, who died while he was a boy, Mr. Copley says, "She was a woman of strong and original cast of mind;

gentle, but firm; sensitive, yet patient. She was one of the pleasantest and most impressive readers I ever knew; and much of what may be called the keys of knowledge, the first germs of thought, I gained from hearing her read, especially the Scriptures. She read poetry admirably, and no one I ever knew surpassed her in reading or reciting the poetry of Burns, or in singing Scottish ballads, with which her memory was well stored."

Josiah was their fourth child, and was born in Shippensburgh, Pa., September 20, 1803. His father soon after resumed the woolen manufacturing business in Blairsville, Pa., but with disastrous results, due mainly to the troubles between this country and England, and the consequent commercial depression. His health gradually failed, and he died poor in 1813. To quote again from the unpublished memoir: "These were days of trial and sorrow, while we all worked diligently, and felt the necessity of doing so. . . . . It was a time of stern necessity, yet the memory of it is sweet; for there was more light than darkness, more joy than sorrow; and it was during this trying period, more than any other, that my sainted mother was made perfect through suffering." He tells us in "A Memory of Early Life,"* how he was apprenticed at an early age to the printing business, and in addition to the office work carried the mail on horseback between Indiana, Johnstown, and Bedford, as well as from Indiana *via* Kittanning and Butler to Freeport, taking the routes

* In "Gatherings in Beulah."

alternately. We can imagine but faintly the loneliness and weariness of those long rides, in all weather; rising before it was light, to travel often through unbroken snow, and this for a boy of but fifteen and upwards. Yet, though he does not tell us so, we can believe that very much of the meditative habits of thought, and the power of close observation, which were his marked characteristics, grew out of just this hard discipline.

In 1825 he went into partnership with Mr. John Croll, in the printing business in Kittanning, Pa. The undertaking was suggested and aided by two or three prominent citizens of that place, among whom were Mr. Philip Mechling and Judge Buffington. The *Kittanning Gazette* was the second paper in the little town, and so the young editors had the benefit which rivalry brings in such enterprises. It is a cause for regret that no copies of the *Gazette* were preserved by Mr. Copley. With characteristic disinterestedness he held to nothing merely because it was his own production. He continued to publish this paper for eight years, the latter four alone. During this period his marriage took place. He had gone to Philadelphia for materials with which to print the *Gazette*, and there, at the home of his uncle, Mr. Sibbet, met Mrs. Margaret Chadwick Haas, step-daughter of his uncle, and the widow of a young physician, who sacrificed his life during an epidemic near Philadelphia in 1824. In 1826 Mr. Copley returned to Philadelphia to be married, and the young couple made the journey to Huntington in a private conveyance, and from there to Kittanning by stage. Mr. Copley writes

somewhere, "Together we have journeyed through much joy and many trials for (over) fifty years, and are together yet." The union was broken by his death, and now one is on either side of the river, he having passed over from Beulah land to the everlasting fields.

Of the six sons and three daughters of the author, six children survive him. Four sons were engaged in the civil war. One, John Sibbet, fell at the battle of South Mountain, Maryland, September, 1862. Another, Albert, was wounded at the battle of Stone River, Tennessee, taken prisoner, and from exposure and privation during captivity, died in a rebel hospital, and sleeps in an unknown grave; but, like the other brother, in the sure hope of a glorious resurrection. Another son* was taken prisoner at Chickamauga in 1863, and suffered untold hardships for seventeen months in Libby Prison and Castle Thunder, Richmond, and in Danville, Andersonville, and South Carolina. Such months of agony as these were to the parents can not be described; and the son who endured it rarely refers to what he suffered and witnessed, the memory being too painful. These were dark days to the parents, but the strong spirit of patriotism and Christian submission helped them to bear it. Mr. Copley gives us a glimpse of his experience in the article "Call you this Chance?"

The author has been too well known for over half a century as an editor and a writer on religious topics to need more than a brief sketch from us. He was connected with the *Pittsburgh Gazette* at

* J. C., Jr.

three different periods as co-editor. First with Robert M. Riddle in 1838–9. At the end of two years his health failed, and in 1840 he removed to Appleby Manor, near Kittanning, and there his family resided for twenty years. But even here, while engaged in superintending a farm and manufacturing establishments, he continued to write, both for the secular and religious press, and also wrote several pamphlets, some political and some in the interests of civilization and progress. Here, too, he published his first collection of religious articles in book form under the title of "Thoughts of Favored Hours," and chose as the motto for that book, "While I was musing the fire burned" (Ps. xxxix. 3). From 1850 to 1852 he was engaged on the editorial staff of the *Pittsburgh Gazette* together with D. N. White, and again his health failed.

In 1860 he removed again with his family to Pittsburgh. The war had broken out; his sons had enlisted, one from a large commercial house in this city, and the patriotism of the author was roused to its highest pitch. He was soon at work again on the now larger editorial staff of the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, and remained in this position, more or less actively engaged, for some years, and even after he had retired from it, continued to contribute to its columns vigorous articles on a wide range of subjects, until within six months of his death.

Mr. Copley was a Presbyterian, and united with that church in very early life. Much as he loved his own church, he gladly recognized other evangelical denominations as simply other divisions of the same great army. Soon after Mr. Copley's death,

one who knew him well* gave a description of his character in an article in the *Presbyterian Banner* which is so true that we give a portion of it here: "While far removed from the position of a radical, yet he could not be termed a conservative. New ideas and new theories had a charm for him. After a thorough analysis and comparison, if he found anything that was good and true, he accepted it. An illustration of this feature of his character will make it clearer than any words. In December last, after Mr. Copley was taken sick, but when he was strong enough to spend his time in his library, the writer passed a morning with him. A few days before, his daughter had given him a copy of the independent revision and translation of the 'Book of Psalms,' by Dr. John DeWitt, and he had, with very great interest, been comparing it with the old King James' version. He had naturally first turned to those Psalms with which he was most familiar, and which had been his solace and stay during the experience of a long life. After a most careful examination, he expressed a decided preference for the new version. Some few renderings he criticised severely; but as we sat there he eagerly selected and read many passages where he thought an obscurity had been swept away and the true sense and beauty fully expressed. He feared that what he termed 'slavish adherence to old forms of expression' would prevent the favorable reception of the revision, and thus deprive many Christians of that which it might be their privilege to enjoy.

* Mr. Joseph Albree.

It was with real sorrow that he pointed out this sentence from Dr. DeWitt's preface: 'Those who wish and hope to see the thought of the original (Old Testament) put forth in the clearest, strongest, and best English expression will not be gratified.'

"He had confidently hoped that the forthcoming revision of the Old Testament would be even better than that of the New; but this remark of one of the revision committee, together with the publication of this independent translation, had greatly lowered his ideas of its excellence. Deprecating the opinion of some Christians that the doctrine of immortality was not contained in the Psalms, he triumphantly turned to the seventy-first and seventy-third, and read portions, that to his mind were revelations of both the resurrection of the body and the conscious everlasting existence of the soul. Within a few days after this visit, Mr. Copley cast his thoughts on this subject into an article which was published in the *United Presbyterian* of December 25, 1884.*

"That a man of eighty-two years of age, who had fed upon and loved the Psalms all through his life should, when near its close, so quickly discover and so gladly welcome the old thought in a new and unfamiliar form is certainly remarkable. In 1878 Mr. Copley published a volume entitled 'Gatherings in Beulah.' A few words from its characteristic preface will make evident the cheerful and joyous spirit of his life: 'It has been the happy lot of the writer to have had his place in

* "A Crippled Translation."

Beulah since his childhood, and never to doubt that the kind and loving Proprietor was speaking to him and to all when He said, "Eat, O friends." So for many years he has been gathering the fruits of that safe and happy land. The fruits that grow on the other side of the river are better still; and many who are now dwelling in Beulah will soon be there, the writer among the rest.' Joy and peace in believing marked the entire life of our departed friend."

Perhaps next to the Bible itself, Mr. Copley read and loved "The Pilgrim's Progress" above all other books, and he often compared events in his own life, or that of others, with the experiences of Christian and his friends. From it he chose the title of the book published a few years ago, and having selected from the articles written since that time enough for a second book of the same size, which he was almost ready to publish when he was laid aside, he said to his family, "I would like it to be called by the same name, for it is the result of ten more years' sojourn in the same land of Beulah." And so the title of the new book is nearly the same as the other.

At length the summons came, after a pilgrimage of over fourscore years. After November, 1884, he never left the house, and the last day of that year was the last in which he left his sick-room. Very gradually his earthly tabernacle was removed. He suffered intensely at times, but with intervals of ease and rest. As the body failed, the spirit grew stronger, and his faith shone brighter; so that all who came in contact with him felt their

own faith strengthened and their hopes quickened. Never was a sick-room brightened by a more joyous confidence in God, or more perfect submission to His will.

The unseen world was as real to him as the one he was about to leave; "Why, it will be just like going from this room into another," said he; and once, longing for sleep, he said, "How pleasant it would be to sleep awhile and waken on the other side." So often did these and similar expressions fall from his lips, that those who loved him best felt it would be wrong to wish to hold him back. Said a friend, after an hour's conversation, in which he went over many of his past experiences and talked still more of his blessed anticipations, "I could listen to him for hours; it is like talking to one who has already been on the other side and is come to tell us a little of it." And yet when the brink of the river was reached, and his feet touched its cold waters, it seemed a strange dealing with this beloved pilgrim that he should shrink back, and trembling on the very border-land, exclaim, "I am in the river now, its waters are about me, and I can not see the other side." As it is written, "A great horror and darkness fell upon Christian," so was it with him, and the words of encouragement from those he was leaving seemed to come to him amid the surging of the waters of the river of death.

Whether this was, as Bunyan has it, "through the machinations of the Adversary," or whether through the failure of his power to apprehend that in which he trusted, he seemed to be left in his

weakness to cope with death alone, feeling as if God had hidden His face from him, we can not tell. But the arm on which he had leaned so long had not let him go, and soon he felt its strong upholding power, and the waters did not overflow him. Peacefully he sank to rest in the evening of March 2, 1885. Like Enoch, throughout life, he "walked with God, and he was not, for God took him."

* * *

PITTSBURGH, PA., 1886.

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GATHERED SHEAVES

"NOT A STRANGER."

PROBABLY the Book of Job is the earliest of the sacred writings. In it there is no trace of the peculiar type of faith which distinguished the religious thought of those whose system of worship was based upon the Abrahamic covenant. Judging from the general tenor of the doctrines uttered in the great debate between Job and his friends during the time of his calamity, I think that they lived before Abraham, and that they were among those who still adhered to the faith which rendered Abel (and probably Adam), Enoch, Noah, and many others, we may hope, who lived after the deluge, acceptable to the Most High. In that book, therefore, we have the ideas which the "sons of God"—as the true worshippers of the Most High are called in the account we have of the generations before the flood, and as they are again called in this book (chapters i. 6 and ii. 1)—set forth.

In the 19th chapter Job becomes fearfully distressed, and cries in bitter anguish, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for

the hand of God hath touched me!" At the same time he complains of their cruelty for misjudging him, exclaiming, "Oh that my words were now written!" And why did he so earnestly wish that his words were written? That he might tell to all generations that he knew that his Redeemer liveth, and that He should stand at the latter day upon the earth; "and though after my skin worms destroy this body (he says), yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." What a sublime cry is this to come out of the lowest depths of affliction and calamity! As an expression of triumph it has been echoing down the ages for nearly four thousand years, and is as strong, and as full of spirit, life, and consolation as when it fell from the lips of the suffering man of Uz; while millions of trembling, struggling believers have gladly adopted the words as their own.

But in the English translation the full force of Job's joyful assurance is not brought out. In the Comprehensive Bible, in which are found in the marginal readings the best emendations of our received translation that the most profound scholars have been able to make, the twenty-sixth verse, which in our Bibles reads—"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God"—is translated thus: "After I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God." This shows us that away back in the days of Job the doctrine not only of a Divine Redeemer, but of the resurrection of the body, were articles of faith devoutly and gladly

held. "After I shall awake, though this body be destroyed," says Job. David, perhaps a thousand years afterward, and a thousand years before Jesus had brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel, exclaimed in joy and triumph, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." Thus we see that not only the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the body, was believed by the saints of all ages. When Jesus told Martha that her brother should rise again, her prompt and positive reply was: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." This shows us that the doctrine was universally held by believers who lived under the light of the Old Testament.

But the amended translation before me, in the alteration of a single word, brings out the exceeding grandeur and beauty of Job's hope, as our received translation does not. In our Bibles the twenty-seventh verse reads: "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not *another*." In the corrected reading it is, "and not a *stranger*." The phrase, "and not a stranger," is found in the German Bible. In this wonderful confession of faith Job rises almost to the glorious assurance of John, who exclaims in a transport of wonder and gladness: "We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is!" When John reached heaven, and met his beloved Master, whose footsteps he had followed for years, he saw one who was not a stranger. So Job's eye of faith, piercing through many centuries, saw his Redeemer standing in the

latter day upon the earth; and whom, not having seen with his natural vision, he loved, and believing, he rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. To him that Redeemer, that Advocate, that Vindicator was no stranger. His faith was like that of Paul where he says: "I know whom I have believed." Job, like Abraham, had seen Christ's day, and seeing it, he was glad. He had opened the door of his heart to his Redeemer, who had come in to him in spirit, and they had supped together and become very intimate—anything else than strangers to each other.

To those who truly believe in Christ He is not, He can not be, a stranger, but a living, loving, ever-present friend. They know Him, confide in Him, hold communion with Him, and are assured that in good time He will call them up to be ever with Him, be made like Him, and see Him as He is. They do not think of Him as they do of other great and good historical characters; men who, having departed, can, during the present mortal life, bear no personal relation to Him, however much their memory may be revered. Abraham may be ignorant of them, but Jesus is not. The saints of past generations are beyond our reach personally. We may profit by their example, but we can hold no direct communion with them in the present life; although we may without presumption indulge the pleasing hope that in the life to come we shall also see them as they are, and be brought into close fellowship with them. But in the case of the Divine Redeemer of whom Job spake, and in whom he believed and rejoiced, the case is altogether differ-

ent. Jesus says of Himself (Rev. i. 18), "I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore"; and again, "I am with you alway"; and again, "I am known of mine," and this knowledge is life eternal, as He Himself declares.

In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus Himself gives a touching and soul-cheering view of the mutual intimacy of the good Shepherd and His sheep. "I am the good Shepherd," He says, "and know my sheep, and am known of mine." He is not a stranger to them, nor are they strangers to Him. "To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out." How beautifully this harmonizes with David's joyful language, where he speaks of the Lord as his Shepherd (Twenty-third Psalm): "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters." Then Jesus goes on: "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice; and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

One day, some seven or eight years ago, while riding out with the venerable Dr. Coan, who had spent a large part of his life as a missionary in Persia, he told me how the shepherds around Oroomiah managed their flocks. It was just as Jesus speaks of it. At night they are safely housed. In the morning the shepherd lets them out, or puts them forth, as Jesus expresses it. He does not drive them, but goes before and leads them to their pasture with his voice or call. One day Mr. Coan

accompanied one of these shepherds to the pasture and sat down with him, while the sheep scattered themselves around nibbling the grass. The shepherd told him that only a part of the flock belonged to him. "Do you know all your own sheep?" Mr. Coan asked. "Oh, yes, I know them all by name." He then called one by its own individual name, which immediately came trotting up to him. "Now show me another of your sheep," said Dr. Coan. He did so. "Call it," said he. The shepherd called it by its own name, and it too came running up as the first had done. "Now call that one," pointing to another. "That sheep is not one of mine," said the shepherd; "I know not its name." "Well, show me another of yours," said the doctor. He did so. "Tell me its name, and let me call it." The name was given, and the doctor called and called, but all in vain. It knew not the voice of a stranger. He then told the shepherd to call it. He did so, and at once the sheep came up—it knew his voice, as Jesus says His sheep know His voice. Dr. Coan said he had never before so felt the impressiveness of this sweet and simple parable of Jesus in which He illustrates the close relationship that there is between Himself and those who truly believe in Him, confide in Him, and yield a glad obedience to His Word; and at the same time of their mutual knowledge of each other. It illustrated, moreover, the unchangeableness of the customs of the people of those Oriental lands.

In the light of this scene how are the tender and glad beauties and consolations of the Twenty-third Psalm brought out! That shepherd of whom

David speaks was not a stranger to His sheep; nor was Job's Redeemer, whom he knew only by faith in the promise of his God, and at a time when the light of Revelation was but a faint twilight, a stranger to him.

THE WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD.

OF the deluge there are and have long been vague and wild traditions among many of the nations and tribes of mankind far separated in both locality and language — people who never heard of each other, or of the record which Moses, guided by inspiration, has given to the world of that great catastrophe. But not even tradition can reach back to the period before the deluge. On that subject the Bible alone throws any light, and that only a glimpse. But that glimpse is enough to show us that the earliest men were not savages, as some of those who aspire to be leaders of thought would have us believe. The great longevity of the human race during that period is clearly and circumstantially stated in the Mosaic record, as well as the fact that after the deluge this length of life was rapidly, but not suddenly, cut down from an average of nine centuries to one, or less than one.

In the very brief account which we have of the family of Cain after his crime, and after his banishment from the neighborhood of Eden, a little light is thrown upon the state of society, and upon the industries, arts, progress, and accomplishments of that early period. Cain, while he lived near his father, and before he killed his brother, was a tiller of the ground, while Abel chose the occupation of

a shepherd. After the murder of Abel, Cain was banished or wandered off to the land of Nod, where, we are told, he built a city and called it Enoch, after the name of his first-born son. This indicates a beginning of something like civilization.

Lamech, the sixth generation from Cain, seems to have been a man of more than ordinary note. He took two wives, named Adah and Zillah, the first women whose names we have after Eve, and these with Naamah, the daughter of Lamech, are the only women named in the history of that long period. "And Adah bear Jabal. He was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." Whatever may have been the musical instruments here spoken of, their existence at all indicates a considerable advance in the arts and even the elegancies of life. "And Zillah she also bear Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." To what extent those arts were carried we have no means of knowing; but that they had grown to very considerable perfection we may infer from the sweeping expression "every artificer in brass and iron"; and we may farther infer this from the fact that Noah was able to construct such a vessel as the ark. Very likely wealth accumulated enormously, and that the luxuries of life kept pace with the wealth of the people. Hence it is that we read, "that the sons of God (those who worshipped the true God) saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose."

From all this we may gather that the family of Cain were an energetic, ingenious, enterprising people, and grew prodigiously in numbers, power, wealth, and luxury; and then, as is always the case, sunk into grosser and grosser wickedness until the horrible state of corruption described in the sixth chapter of Genesis resulted. The alliances which became common between the sons of God and the daughters of men engulfed the whole race in one common ruin except Noah and his family.

It is not probable, however, that much substantial architecture, such as the post-diluvians entered upon, after the race had become sufficiently numerous, existed before the flood, otherwise more or less of the ruins of such works would have remained; for it is not at all probable that the flood made any considerable change on the earth's surface.

The curious poetical outburst of Lamech, addressed to his two wives Adah and Zillah (Gen. iv. 23, 24), so full of passion and of either remorse or desperation, as the two different readings make it, is put on record, doubtless, to show us that the fierce passions which ultimately filled the earth with violence had run down with ever-increasing force from the fratricidal Cain, the father of that branch of the race, to the day when the flood came and took them all away. It shows us, moreover, the far-gone antiquity of the poetic form of speech, which was more common among the ancients than the moderns. Language was stronger then than it is now, but had less precision. The Hebrew prophets all spoke in this form; so did Balaam the Moabite, and in this form Homer narrated his story

of the siege of Troy. Wild as this outburst of Lamech is, it reveals enough to show us that the language of the antediluvians possessed tremendous vigor.

In this connection it is well enough to remark that our Saviour, in all His discourses, never resorted to the poetic style of speech. No teacher was ever more severely didactic, none more simple. The Book of Job is nearly all made up of the sublimest poetry, and we may accept those lofty utterances as specimens of the religious language which shed light upon the minds of the faithful branch of the race from Seth to Moses—inspired truth, as it was known to the "sons of God" both before and after the flood.

We read that "there were giants in the earth in those days." This is all we know of that class; and it is folly to attempt to be wise above what is written. It is most likely, however, that these were men of more than common physical size and strength, with corresponding courage and ambition, around whom ordinary men would gather and take them as their leaders. Thus they would become captains of lawless bands of desperadoes; and in their mutual wars would soon turn the whole populated world into a state of confusion and violence. The longevity of men in those days would render such a state of things tenfold more fearful. Think of the same leaders of bands of desperadoes ranging around the world, century after century, with ever increasing power, depravity, and cruelty. So horrible was the condition of things that even God Himself used the language of sorrow and distress

at the contemplation of the scene; and then, after providing for the salvation of Noah and his family, swept the earth with a flood of water. It was an act of mercy on His part, as well as one of justice.

THE BLESSING OF ISHMAEL.

THE faith and patience of Abraham were long and severely tried while he waited for the promise that he should become a father and the progenitor of a great nation, and that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. When this promise was first given he had just been commanded to go to a land which God should show him. He was then seventy-five years of age, but still childless.

Abraham, doubtless, expected that the promised heir would soon be given; but God, to whom years are as nothing, kept him waiting, waiting, until his faith began to stagger, and he despondingly exclaimed: "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" Once more the promise of an innumerable posterity is given, and that it should come, not through his steward, but be his own offspring. So matters rested for a while longer.

At the end of ten years, Sarah, despairing of ever becoming a mother, persuaded Abraham to take Hagar, her Egyptian handmaid, to be a second wife, hoping in that way to reach the promised blessing. It will not do to apply our Christian ethics to a transaction which took place at that age of

the world. It was, it is true, a case of doing evil that good might come. On her part it was an act of heroic self-abnegation; and the most that can be said against it is, that it showed evidence of a lack of faith; for it was taking God's work out of His hands and undertaking to manage it themselves. It is true that He had not yet said: "Sarah shall have a son." That is all that can be said in the way of mitigation or apology.

As the result of staggering faith, and of this purely human arrangement, Ishmael was born. Of his personal history we know very little; yet he was one of the most remarkable men the world ever saw—not as an individual man, however, but as the progenitor of a race as numerous, as marked, and as enduring as that which sprang from Isaac and Jacob.

While the boy was still a member of his father's family, and about fourteen years of age, the Lord again talked with Abraham, and promised another son by Sarah, his true and lawful wife. But at this time Abraham was ninety-nine years old, and Sarah ninety. Again the faith of Abraham staggered; for he supposed that at their time of life such a thing was impossible. Then it was that he offered up the agonizing prayer, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" The Lord then replied that Sarah his wife should have a son indeed, and that He should call his name Isaac, and that with him would He establish an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. In this covenant the Messiah is embraced.

But the prayer of the patriarch for the son of the

bondwoman was heard and answered. "As for Ishmael I have heard thee," said God. "Behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly." And again, at another time He said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called; and also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." And before his birth, while his mother was for a short time a fugitive, driven forth by her mistress Sarah for insolence, the Lord said to her, "Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man. His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

Thus we see that from Abraham sprang the only two well-defined, imperishable races the world ever saw—the Israelites, or Jews, and the Arabs. The first, as we all know, are a distinct, strongly marked race, although scattered abroad among all nations; the others still dwelling to this day in the presence of all their brethren of the human race—wild men, many of them rovers, some of them robbers; their hand still against every man, and every man's hand against them. There they have been through more than thirty-five centuries. Empires and dynasties have risen and fallen in their presence; but there they abide with about as much vitality as ever. Their language is rich and copious. Even our own noble tongue has been greatly enriched by what has been drawn from the Arabic. Science, especially that of numbers, owes much of its wealth to the

Arabs. To them the world is indebted for those absolutely perfect characters, the numerals, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., capable of those easy and endless combinations with which we are so familiar, and which are equally adapted to every language.

Politically the Arabs never had a place among the great nationalities of the earth. They have dwelt as a distinct people in the presence of their brethren, but were not of them. They have shed a prodigious influence upon mankind, but were hardly at all influenced in return. They have been originators, but not copyists. They are a great people; but we can hardly say that they have ever been a nation. Ishmael has for thirty-five hundred years been a wild man; yet in some directions very highly civilized.

Rich and copious as is the Arabic language, no great historian, philosopher, poet, or dramatist ever used it, and in it is found no product of deep thought or of tempered imagination. Even its lyrics, lacking the grand ideas of the Hebrew poets, are tame and spiritless, and mere plays of luxurious fancy. That well-known series of extravagant romances, "The Arabian Nights," is the sole classic in that language, if we except the Koran of Mohammed, the thoughts of which are drawn largely from the Old and New Testaments.

The line of Isaac led to Christ; that of Ishmael to Mohammed. The kingdom of the first was not of this world. He sternly forbade the use of the sword. That of the second was altogether of this world, and the sword was the chief, almost the only instrument used to propagate his faith. "I, if I be

lifted up," said Jesus, "will *draw* all men unto me." Mohammed took the sword and set out upon the cruel mission of *driving* all men to embrace his doctrines. "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword," said He who has all power in heaven and on earth; and in that divine fiat we may read the inevitable doom of Islamism.

Was Mohammed a blessing or a curse to the world, all things considered? This is a problem upon which much might be said on both sides. At the time when he proclaimed the Semitic doctrine of the unity of God, A.D. 622, Christianity in the East had become too corrupt and therefore too weak to resist the abominations of Polytheism which generally prevailed in those nations and tribes upon which the sword of that extraordinary man imposed a purer and better faith, even though it had no saving power unto eternal life. As a reformer he may be classed among benefactors; but as a religious teacher he was merely a false prophet, and bound men faster in spiritual bondage than any other the world ever saw. Still he lifted the people whom he subdued to a higher plane of earthly life, by giving them higher and purer ideas of the Deity. Even the Christian churches of that day in the East, with their images, pictures, saints, Mariolatry, and its mummery and dead forms, fell below Mohammed and his sublime teachings of Allah. On the other hand, Islamism has through twelve centuries stood as the greatest menace to Christianity and the most formidable bar to its progress—a bar which no power short of that of the Holy Spirit is able to remove.

But there are now signs that a better day is dawning upon the lands of Ishmael, and that the Crescent is beginning to pale before the superior rays of the Sun of Righteousness. The news of the progress of a pure Christian faith in the lands where the Arabic tongue is the vernacular of the people, under the gentle teaching of Christian missionaries, and under the powerful influence of evangelical presses, is very cheering indeed; and to us it is all the more gratifying to know that the most efficient of these missionaries are Americans. "It is a land," says a late able writer, "where there is much intellectual light, and where rapid progress is being made in literary and scientific culture. To borrow a commonplace expression, there is what might be called an intellectual 'boom' in Syria at the present time. Schools are called for on every side. Villages send the most imposing official delegations they can muster to visit the missionaries and ask for a Protestant teacher and educational advantages for their children."

THE BLESSING OF JOSEPH.

OF Jacob's twelve sons Reuben was the first born, and would, but for the great fault of his life, have inherited the first and greatest blessing. But the birthright did not become void because Reuben forfeited it, as we learn from 1 Chron. v. 1, 2, where the case is thus stated in a parenthesis: "For he (Reuben) was the first-born; but forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel; and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the Chief Ruler (or Prince); but the birthright was Joseph's." The prime meaning of the Chief Ruler (or Prince) who should come of Judah is doubtless Christ, or the Messiah, although David and his royal successors are included. "Judah" — exclaimed the dying patriarch, as he called his sons in the order of their ages to receive his prophetic blessing—"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up. He stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not

depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

Here we see wherein Judah prevailed above his brethren, because of him came the Chief Ruler—Christ—whom the patriarch calls Shiloh. But still "the birthright was Joseph's."

In the remarkable scene between Jacob and Joseph, when the latter brought his two little boys, Manasseh and Ephraim, to receive their grandfather's blessing before he departed, we have a prediction of the coming greatness of the family or tribe of Joseph which harmonizes perfectly with the blessings afterward pronounced upon him by both Jacob and Moses. Let us quote a few words (Gen. xlviii. 15–19): "And he blessed Joseph and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him [or, as the margin reads, it was evil in his eyes]; and he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father; for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be

greater than he, *and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.*"

Let us now turn to the peculiar and illimitable blessings pronounced upon Joseph by the dying Jacob, and also by Moses—the one the father, the other the leader of the chosen people: "And Jacob called unto his sons and said, Gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. Gather yourselves together and hear, ye sons of Jacob, and hearken unto Israel your father" (Gen. xlix. 1, 2). He then goes on in the loftiest poetic strain, first speaking of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi in terms more like maledictions than blessings. Judah, the fourth in order, is then blessed in the grand and lofty terms already quoted. The next six in order are briefly passed over. Joseph, the eleventh, then comes in, and nothing can be in stronger contrast than his blessing and those of his elder brethren, except that of Judah. Let us quote it in full: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob [from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel]; even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb: the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills:

they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren."

Before offering any remarks upon this wonderful outburst of prophetic poetry from the lips of a dying man, let us quote the equally grand words of Moses when he blessed the children of Israel by their tribes before he left them to go up the mountain to die. We shall quote only what he said of Joseph (Deut. xxxiii. 13–17): "And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that couches beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof, and for the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush; let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them shall he push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh."

In the reign of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, Israel was divided into two separate kingdoms known afterward by the terms Israel and Judah. Ten tribes revolted against the house of David, leaving only Judah and Benjamin. The half tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (the house of Joseph)

revolted with the others on that occasion, and all their subsequent history, extending through a period of about two hundred and fifty years, is one of idolatry, wickedness, oppression, turmoil, trouble, retrogression, and national decay, until finally they were carried away into perpetual captivity by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, and have ever since been spoken of as "the lost tribes." A scattered remnant was left, who, combined with the heathen colonists sent in by the king of Assyria, constituted the people of Samaria, so often spoken of in the New Testament.

Where, then, are we to look for the fulfilment of the magnificent predictions of Jacob and Moses of the greatness and prosperity of Joseph? To apply such terms to that people during their comparatively short and troublous sojourn in Palestine is impossible. Moreover, the blessings pronounced by Jacob burst away beyond anything that had been promised to Abraham and Isaac, and are different in kind. Hence says he, "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills." The blessing of Judah was better than that of Joseph, because it included the Shiloh, the Christ; that of Joseph, on the other hand, seems to be all made up of earthly blessings—numbers, power, prosperity. "His horns [says Moses, and horns are the emblems of power] are like the horns of unicorns; with them shall he push the people together to the ends of the earth." Joseph, when he was an individual man, was carried away into captivity, and in that exile, while separate

from his brethren, he became great in power; and from the tenor of the remarkable prophecies under consideration, he, in his descendants, may again become great; although no man can even guess where those descendants are, or who they are. But that a people, of whom inspiration would speak as those two great men spoke, should pine away and perish from the earth, leaving no trace, is altogether improbable. Paul assures us that "all Israel shall be saved"—not the Jews only, but all Israel—and it is a pleasant thought that, at the right time, the Lord will bring out His "hidden ones"; for He "knoweth them that are His."

I shall indulge in no speculations as to where they are, or who they are—possibly they themselves do not know; but if they are still in existence, they will at the proper time trace out their ancestry. Some great and numerous people may ere long astonish the world, as the ruler of Egypt astonished his brethren three thousand years ago, by the announcement, "I am Joseph!"

GOD'S DELIGHT IN HIS PEOPLE.

TWICE, in his first epistle, John declares in the most emphatic terms that "God is love." Jesus says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then He adds, "For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him." (In this last verse I quote the revised version.) In these great sayings the benevolence, the goodness, the mercy, the kindness, the pity and the compassion of our Heavenly Father are set before us in terms beyond which human language can not go. He gave the richest gift which it was in His power to give for the redemption of a world of sinners. Paul's mind, after writing to his Corinthian converts about their gifts to himself and other saints, seems to have suddenly darted up to the infinite generosity of God, and he concludes that particular subject with the sublime and rapturous exclamation, "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!"

So far we have been considering the love of God as it is manifested in the attributes of His nature above enumerated, and which showers benefits and blessings upon His poor fallen creature man, and fills his heart with love and joy and peace and gratitude, as we have just seen that it did in the case of Paul. But how is the emotional nature of God Himself

affected by the relation to Himself into which redeeming grace brings the ransomed sinner? Does he derive any happiness from it? No one who has proper reverence would dare to answer such a question affirmatively as a result of his own reasoning; but it has pleased God to answer it in His Word. Our great Redeemer, speaking through a prophet said, "My delights were with the sons of men." Delights is one of the strongest words that we can use to express the most lively joy. When an angel came to Daniel in answer to his supplication, his first salutation was, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved!" Then we read of "that disciple whom Jesus loved." Again, Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him and he with me," thus expressing a strong desire for loving, mutual intercourse with him who opens the door. This accords with that wonderful prophetic utterance—already quoted—"My delights were with the sons of men." These Scriptures express far more than mere love of benevolence. It is even more than love of complacency. The redeemed sinner, washed in the blood of the Lamb, becomes as holy, as pure, as good, and as lovely, in his finite measure, as is the Saviour Himself, and is thenceforth an object of great joy to God Himself. The relation which will subsist eternally between them will be one of mutual joy, infinite endearment, reciprocal love. The loves of earth, various and beautiful as they are, are but faint shadows of this all-perfect relationship.

Have I here spoken with unwarranted boldness?

Some humble, trembling, self-depreciating reader may think so; and if we stood in our own native character, righteousness, and merits, he would be right. But if, through faith, we become one with Christ, and by receiving Him become children of God, there is no limit to our deservings, no bounds to the complacent love to which we may without presumption lay claim. Yet still, to Him who bought us with His blood, be all the glory.

But to show that the foregoing is not extravagant, I need only quote one verse from Zephaniah iii. 17, in which God Himself tells what joy—deep, heart-felt, emotional joy—He has in His people, His Zion, His redeemed ones. Hear what He says: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." It is a great thing that the believer can be joyful in God, and entertain a firm hope of soon seeing his Redeemer face to face; but that the Lord his God should be passionately joyful in him is what no one would have dared to hope for, had not God Himself said it. This is not the language of an infinitely great being, dwelling far above all things in inherent blessedness and infinite repose; but of a loving parent enjoying the society of his own beloved children, whom his loving-kindness has made very happy, and who have been made worthy of his love by the impartation of his grace and the imputation of their Saviour's righteousness.

It may be that there are some who will argue that this amazing message was sent through Zephaniah to God's ancient chosen people, and that it

ought not to be applied to Gentile believers the world over. All the answer I shall offer to that is a short quotation from Galatians iii. 26–29, where Paul writes: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Let this suffice on that point.

If, in this brief article, I have succeeded in lifting up any weak and timid soul to something like a realizing sense of the love of God, and of the place in God's heart which he occupies through the abounding grace bestowed upon him, notwithstanding his deeply-felt infirmities and sins, my labor has not been in vain. Still, let the admonition of the apostle be ever kept in mind—"He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord."

THE RECHABITES

ALLUSION is often made by the advocates of total abstinence from all intoxicants to the Rechabites, who were the first society or people who acted fully up to that safe and wholesome principle of which history gives us any account. In the thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah we have the fullest account of their manner of life and of their customs; although that is not the only place in the Bible where mention is made of them. In 2 Kings x. 15, we find the first mention of the name of Rechab, where it is narrated that Jonadab, the son of Rechab, met Jehu, the furious king of Israel, who was anointed for the express purpose of cutting off the whole house of Ahab and the priests of Baal. When that bloody commission was nearly finished, Jehu met Jonadab in a friendly manner, and took him up in his chariot, saying: "Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord." He was then on his way to Samaria to put all the priests of Baal to the sword. In 2 Samuel mention is made of a man named Jonadab; but that was a different man.

This family or tribe of Rechabites were not Israelites, but a branch of the Kenites. That they were believers in and worshippers of Israel's God, we may safely infer from the words and conduct of Jehu on the occasion just mentioned. They seem to have lived apart from the Israelites as a close community, having their own peculiar usages.

What these customs were is clearly set forth in the thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah, where the prophet, under the divine command, severely tested the abstemious principles of this simple and peaceful community of separatists. Let us quote:

"The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying: 'Go unto the house of the Rechabites and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.'"

When Jehu met Jonadab this little community lived not far from Samaria; now they are at Jerusalem. According to the received chronology that meeting was 884 years before Christ. The date of this temptation to drink wine was in the year 589, which shows that for at least 295 years these people had strictly obeyed the command of their great ancestor Jonadab, the son of Rechab.

"Then," continues the prophet, "I took Jaazaniah, the son of Habaziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites, and I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah, the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door."

See how careful the prophet is to tell us into what a remote and secluded place he took them, and how far removed from the more sacred and consecrated portions of the edifice.

"And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them: Drink ye wine.' But they said: 'We will drink no wine; for Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us,

saying, "Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your sons forever; neither shall ye build houses, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyards, nor have any; but all your days shall ye dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers." Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; nor to build houses for us to dwell in; neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed; but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab, our father, commanded us.'"

They then go on to state that owing to the invasion of the land by Nebuchadnezzar, they had left their former residence and come to Jerusalem as a place of refuge. After holding up the obedience of the Rechabites to the rebellious Jews as an example, the Lord spoke through the prophet directly to the Rechabites: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab, your father, and kept his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you; therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me forever."

These strange, exclusive, peculiar, but peaceful and excellent people come up before us only twice in the sacred narrative. Their history is as mysterious as that of Melchizedec, and like him they seem to have clung to the faith of the earliest worshippers of the most high God, amid surrounding idolatry, and were by him preserved in peace and guarded from harm through all the turbulent history of Israel and Judah; and they depart from our ken

with the blessing of the Lord of hosts resting upon them. Their simple habits of life are so well described in the passage just quoted that nothing more need be added. For what were they blessed? Was it for their abstemious habits? Partly so—for these habits were wise and good—but more for their filial obedience. The people of Israel and Judah were in almost perpetual rebellion against their Father in heaven; while these simple-hearted Rechabites lived in strict obedience to the commandment of Jonadab, their father, who had moldered to dust centuries before.

But whence came they? I know not that I could trace their origin in the Bible; but Dr. F. W. Krummacher, of Germany, in his "Last Days of Elisha," has a plausible and pleasant theory that the Kenites were the descendants of Abraham by Keturah, the wife he took after the death of Sarah. She had several sons, one of whom was named Midian. These sons he sent away with gifts; but Isaac was his heir and successor. When Moses fled from Egypt he wandered off to the land of Midian, a district in Arabia, east of Horeb, which was settled probably by the son of Abraham and Keturah who bore that name. It was here that the romantic incident at the well, where the daughters of Jethro were watering their flocks, happened. Seeing some rude fellows driving these defenceless girls away from the well and taking possession of it themselves, Moses, like a true knight, drove them away and himself drew water for the flock. What Dr. Krummacher says of this incident and what follows, I shall quote at some length; and whether

the reader shall regard it as fact or fancy, or a mingling of both, he will find it pleasant reading. He says:

"Most agreeably surprised by the unexpected assistance of the benevolent stranger, the maidens hasten back to their encampment, and the first person they meet in its vicinity is their grandfather Reguel, who expresses his astonishment at seeing them return so early. They do not leave him long in suspense about the cause of it, and circumstantially relate the terror they were in when an Egyptian man protected them against the rudeness of the shepherds, drew water for them, and with his own hand watered their flocks. The old man, on hearing this, was grieved that, forgetting the sacred duties of hospitality, they had suffered the obliging individual to pursue his way, instead of inviting him to their father's tents; and after having seriously reproved his granddaughters, he sent them back, saying, 'Go and look for the man, and if you find him, urge him to come and eat bread with us.' The damsels yield a willing obedience, and have not penetrated far into the wilderness before they are again met by the friendly stranger, who is easily induced to accept their invitation. On their return to the tents with their new guest, they meet with their father, Jethro, and having also informed him how nobly and boldly the stranger had taken their part, the latter is cordially welcomed by the worthy people, and urged to continue in their quiet social circle as long as he pleases. How gladly is the invitation accepted by the stranger, who had never imagined that in this remote part of the desert he should have met with such a reception; for it is not long ere, to his great and joyful surprise, he ascertains that he is not only among kind and sociable people, but that he has entered the circle of those who are companions in the faith and partakers of the same spirit. The little tribe know and worship the true God. Jethro is even a priest of God, and a preacher of his name. Moses, who had never had an idea of a church of God out

of Israel, feels greatly surprised, having believed that the wilderness was inhabited solely by savage idolaters; but now sees himself surrounded by brethren in the Lord, and feels himself under the influence of a divine life and a sanctified love. His satisfaction is great; and that of the amiable family, after a mutual communication of their inmost thoughts, not less so. Their guest naturally wishes to know in what way divine truth had reached them; and learns that this favored tribe are descendants of Midian, the son of Abraham and Keturah. He hears that a rich vein of divine manifestation had been handed down to them by their forefathers, although it was scarcely any longer visible amongst the majority of the people from the mass of heathenish error which had attracted itself to it. In one family, however, that of the Kenites, it had been preserved pure and unmingled; and to this family—which must not be confounded with the Canaanitish Kenites—they were privileged to belong."

There, allied to that family, Moses spent forty years of his life. Zipporah, one of Jethro's daughters, became his wife early in his sojourn in Midian. He lived the life of a shepherd, and was caring for his flock on the slopes of Horeb when the Lord called him at the burning bush to go back to Egypt and emancipate his brethren from cruel bondage and lead them to the promised land. After all this had been accomplished, and the pilgrim host had passed the Red Sea and Sinai and resumed their march toward the desert east of Horeb, Jethro, accompanied by the wife and children of Moses, visited the camp of Israel. He is deeply affected and exclaimed: "Blessed be the Lord who hath delivered you out of the hands of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh! Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods; for in the

thing wherein they dealt proudly He was above them." He then took a burnt-offering and sacrifices and offered them in thankful adoration to the Lord. By this we are able to judge of the character of the man and of his people. No wonder that Moses was anxious to take him along to the promised land. "We are journeying," said he, "to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you; come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Of this Dr. Krummacher says: "Jethro himself returned; but Jethro's house, his family, his relatives, and others of the tribe of the Kenites, believers like himself in the only true God, forsook their native land and joined the wandering train of the chosen race, never to leave it again."

Of the historical accuracy of this statement my readers are as competent to judge as I am, and many much more so. That the Kenites were closely allied to Israel, and that there never was any hostility between them, is clear; but that they never departed from the worship of the true God, as Dr. Krummacher contends, may be true, but it is not proven.

But at the time of Israel's deepest declension there arose an extraordinary man, known to us by the name of Jonadab, the son of Rechab. Whether Rechab was his immediate progenitor, or a more remote ancestor, we know not. In 2 Samuel a man named Rechab is mentioned who was put to death by David for a barbarous act, but it is not probable that he was the ancestor of Jonadab. Be that as it may, it is certain that a man named

Rechab gave his name to a branch or offshoot of the Kenite tribe, and that Jonadab instituted certain peculiar customs and modes of life which made them as strongly marked separatists as any found in the history of the world; and we have seen how faithfully they adhered to his rules through three centuries, and for so doing they received an emphatic divine benediction.

It is a pleasant thought that this strange family, whom God says shall not want a man to stand before Him forever, are the direct descendants of Abraham. The Arabs from Ishmael, the Israelites from Isaac, and the Kenites, or at least the Rechabites, from Midian, the son of Abraham by Keturah, are perpetual and indestructible in their generations. The first two are as numerous and as full of vitality to-day as they ever were; and if we may accept as truth the following, which is found on page 109 of the volume from which I have already quoted, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, does not want a man to stand before the Lord this day:

"Not a long time ago a missionary is said to have found them out in the heart of Asia, and has given the following account of the circumstance. One day he was met in the depths of a distant wilderness by a splendidly attired horseman, arrayed and armed after the Arabian manner, of martial bearing, who, on the missionary inquiring who he was, hastily and haughtily replied in a powerful voice, '*A son of Rechab!*' The missionary on this presented him with an Arabic Bible, printed parallel with the Hebrew text; on which the son of the desert turned to the prophecy of Jeremiah, and read in Hebrew the thirty-fifth chapter, which treated of his order. Being further interrogated by the stranger as to his abode, and if there were many of his tribe, he invited him to visit them in their

tents which were near at hand, and to bring him as many Bibles as he could spare. He then turned his horse about, gave him the spurs, and disappeared in the wide and pathless desert.

"The missionary followed the direction which the son of Rechab had taken, and met, not far from Mecca, with the tribe which had been indicated to him. He found them dwelling in tents as of old, and spread over three fruitful and verdant districts. Their number amounted to several thousands. They strictly adhered to Jonadab's rules and to their forefathers' manner of life; built no houses, drank no wine, professed to belong, as far as they understood it, to the Jewish persuasion, and possessed a large portion of the Old Testament as the standard of their faith. They fought for their laws against Mohammed sword in hand, and, although conquered, were not subdued. They continued true to their creed and their traditions. The other Asiatic Jews think highly of them, and believe that whenever they shall return to the promised land the Rechabites will act an important part and join them as valiant confederates."

Thus we see that the promise of the Lord of hosts through Jeremiah more than 2,500 years ago, that "Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me forever," still holds good. What stronger proof could there be of the truth of the Holy Scriptures than the continued existence of this little tribe not far from the locality of their earliest ancestor, Midian, the son of Abraham, still adhering to the abstemious rule which Jonadab gave to his branch of the tribe, his family, in the dark days when the idolatrous house of Ahab ruled over Israel? And where can we find a stronger argument that the principle of total abstinence from intoxicating drink has the divine approbation and blessing?

I might run a parallel between this ancient sect and the several peculiar, abstemious, peaceful, and exclusive sects of Christendom, such as the Quakers, Mennonites, Dunkers, and others which originated in the Protestant Church since the Reformation, and the Jansenists of France in the Catholic Church; but I leave that to the reader, as this article is long enough.

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

DAVID, while a boy in his father's home, kept a flock of sheep on the hills and vales near Bethlehem; probably on the east side, and not far from the rugged and sterile region which stretches from the western shore of the Dead Sea toward Bethlehem. I say this because David himself tells us that a lion and a bear attacked his flock, and that he followed both those predatory animals and slew them. He told King Saul of these exploits in order to convince him that he was able to encounter and slay the giant of Philistia who at that moment was defying the armies of Israel. Now, it is not likely that lions and bears ever ventured to the western or northern side of Bethlehem; hence in imagination I locate David's sheep pasture to the eastward of the town, a comparatively sterile and uninhabited region to this day.

Thus David was a shepherd, faithful, watchful, and courageous. He was there at his lonely post when Samuel the prophet went by divine direction to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be king over Israel in the place of the rejected Saul, he not yet knowing which of them the Lord had chosen. Seven of the sons of Jesse were caused to pass before the prophet, not one of whom was the Lord's choice. Then Samuel said unto Jesse, "Are here all thy children?" To which Jesse answered,

"There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep." He was sent for at once, and soon came in. "Now he was ruddy," says the sacred historian, "and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him, for this is he."

This was some time before he slew Goliath of Gath. But this ceremony of anointing did not change his humble occupation of a shepherd, for Samuel did not tell either Jesse or his sons what its significance was. Some time after this the Philistines invaded the land. The armies of Israel were drawn together to defend it, and the three elder sons of Jesse were soldiers in that army.

Jesse sent David to the army to inquire after the welfare of his brethren and to take some supplies to them, just as Jacob, long before, had sent Joseph on a similar errand. Eliab, the elder, as soon as he discovered that David was taking some interest in the contest, treated him with haughty scorn and contempt, saying, "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.' It is most probable that Eliab's heart was full of envy because Samuel had anointed David after rejecting him and his other brethren. At all events we learn from the words of the vain and ill-natured man that David was still nothing but a shepherd, and that he was taking care of a few sheep in the wilderness. At this time David was both a poet and a musician, for prior to this visit to the camp he had played the

harp before Saul to drive away the evil spirit which troubled him.

I think it was about this time, whether before or after his anointing it matters not, that he composed that inimitable lyric of which I propose to speak, the Twenty-third Psalm. In it he spoke as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. Like all other prophets he spoke better than he himself was aware of; and his words have warmed, invigorated, and comforted the hearts of more than fifty generations, and are as fresh to-day, and as applicable to the believing heart as they were when first sung by their author in that solitary wilderness where he watched over his flock. Let us imagine him seated on a little elevation overlooking a valley through which "quiet waters" flowed. He can see all his sheep. Some are feeding, some lying down, near the still water. All is safe, all is peace, all is quiet enjoyment. *I* am the shepherd of these sheep; but who is *my* Shepherd? "Jehovah is *my* Shepherd," as I am the shepherd of these poor, defenceless, but happy animals. This is the grand opening proposition, and upon it hangs all that follows. "The Lord is my Shepherd"; therefore "I shall not want." He then goes on to enumerate some of the leading benefits which his divine Shepherd is bestowing upon him in strains of such joy and confident assurance that there is nothing to complain of, nothing more to ask for.

It is pleasant to think that this brief Psalm of triumph, this outburst of mingled gratitude and trust, was the utterance of a young man in the midst of necessary watchfulness and care, not unat-

tended with danger, as we know from the visits of the lion and the bear. In his faith in God there is not a shadow of doubt or misgiving. He seems to be as happy as a mortal man can be even in the things of the present, and to this is added the assurance of goodness and mercy all the days of his life and of still greater joy in the house of the Lord forever.

Now let all children be taught the words, the few simple, beautiful words, of this Psalm, and taught to appropriate it as their own, as one of their "songs in the house of their pilgrimage."

THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM.

IN the Fifty-first Psalm we have the deep, heart-felt, penitential feelings of David set forth as he only could express them. He never ceased to mourn over his sin; but the words which a sense of his guilt wrung from his broken heart, and which he left on record, have been an inestimable blessing to the world ever since they were penned. In this we see how God brings good out of evil. See how David pleads. It is not the language of one who felt himself to be a castaway. It is anything else than the language of despair; it is that of a child who knows that he is still beloved, although he has grievously offended. He expresses no dread of utter and final condemnation; but his cry is that of a lost sheep who has strayed away from the fold of the Good Shepherd, and was entangled in the dark mountains of sin. He is a wanderer, and longs to get back; a captive, and cries for deliverance. He sees and feels his guilt, and prays, "Purge me, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones that Thou hast broken may rejoice. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free Spirit."

And now the blessing which he had lost through his own waywardness and folly, he seems to have found; for rising above his own personal distress, he bursts out into a sublime prayer for Zion. The

whole Psalm is the language of an offending child, one who knows that he still holds that relation to his Father, God.

Too many Christian commentators, divines, and others, have held up the language of the Psalmist as if he was deprecating divine wrath and vengeance. Dr. Watts, in one of his paraphrases of this Psalm, has this verse:

> "Should sudden vengeance seize my breath,
> I must pronounce Thee just in death;
> And if my soul were sent to hell,
> Thy righteous law approves it well."

Now how does this gloomy language agree with what the Psalmist said, or with this precious verse from 1 John i. 9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"? Observe, the Apostle does not say that in doing this God is merciful and gracious, but that He is "faithful and just." In the most emphatic language Paul tells us that "there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus"; and this David was before he fell into his great crime. Had any one told him what he would do, he would have exclaimed as Hazael did, "What! is Thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Yet he did it. Peter, when told that he would thrice deny his Lord that very night, exclaimed, "Though all men should deny Thee, yet will not I." Yet he did do it. Jesus, in view of this fearful aberration, said to Peter: "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." And it did not. Smitten, melted by that loving, pitying, sorrowing

glance, he went out and wept bitterly, he confessed and bewailed his sin, as we know David did, and like him he was instantly forgiven. The faith of neither failed, far as they had wandered and terribly as they had sinned. The language of this grand and precious Psalm is as full of faith as it is of penitence.

To mingle thoughts of death, hell, and damnation with that touching and piteous wail of sorrow, penitence, and faith, as Dr. Watts has done, is a sad departure from the spirit which runs through it, and is calculated to lead the minds of worshippers to conceptions hard, dark, and erroneous, of our loving Father who sent His Son to seek and save the lost. Extreme cases prove principles; hence it has pleased God to set before us the cases of two of His most eminent saints, David and Peter, to prove to us, by suffering them to be led by the evil one into the darkest sin, that the believer can not wander so far, nor fall so low, but that His love and power are able to bring him back, to restore his soul, and make him to "walk in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

A NEW REVISION OF THE PSALMS.

THE revision of the Old Testament, which has been in the hands of the Anglo-American Company for about twelve years, will be given to the public in the early part of 1885. It, like the revised New Testament, will be first printed in England, in volumes of larger and smaller type, and at higher and lower prices. When published it will attract much interest among Bible students throughout the entire English-speaking world, now numbering more than one hundred millions of the human race.

In the meantime an independent revision of the Psalms, by John De Witt, D.D., of the Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, N. J., a member of the American Old Testament revision company, has just been published in New York, in a beautiful volume from the press of Richard Brinkerhoff. This work was done with the cordial approbation of the author's associates of the revision company.

For a few days past, while confined to the house by indisposition, I have been examining it and comparing it with the old version with ever-increasing interest. The solemn and majestic style of the old King James' version is well maintained in this, while blemishes and obscurities are satisfactorily removed or made clear. The Psalms are given in the poetic form of the original Hebrew. Take, for example, the first verse of the 22d Psalm:

My God! my God!
Why hast Thou forsaken me?
Why art Thou afar from helping me?
Afar from my suffering cry?

In the old translation this verse reads thus in prose form: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? why art Thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" "The words of my roaring" is a strong phrase, but coarse compared with the last line of the revised rendering, "my suffering cry"—than which no words could be stronger or more touchingly impressive. This verse gives a correct idea of the Hebrew poetic form, which is maintained throughout the entire book.

In his preface, speaking of the forthcoming revision of the Old Testament, the author remarks: "Those who wish and hope to see the thought of the original put forth in the clearest, strongest, and best English expression will not be gratified. It is only by independent, individual effort that such revisions of the Psalms can be produced. It was this that induced the writer to attempt the translation of the Psalms into language that should render the original more faithfully, and yet more poetically."

Dr. De Witt, in his preface, dwells at length upon the Hebrew tenses, or rather the absence of tenses. "This doctrine," he says, "boldly stated, is that there are no tenses in the Hebrew. There is nothing in any verb form to indicate whether it is past, present, or future. The so-called tenses are rather moods. . . . . The one describes action as *completed*, the other as *commencing* and *in progress*. . . . . The historian, entering into the spirit of his narrative,

pictures the events as springing up successively as if under his own eye. On the other hand the prophet transports himself into the future, and describes what shall inevitably occur, as if already accomplished."

Any reader of the English Bible can see that this is so in the case of the historian, beginning with the account of creation, and all subsequent events narrated in the historical Scriptures. Still more plainly is this seen in the prophetic writings, where, for example, Isaiah, in chapter liii., is transported in spirit into the Christian era, and speaks of the atoning death of Christ as an already accomplished fact. The same is true of the 46th Psalm, in which the writer bounds into a still more remote future, and bids the people for whom he writes to "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth!" It is the language of God Himself, to whom all things are everlastingly present, but is addressed immediately to all successive generations to the end of time, and adapted to their several conditions. The desolations here spoken of are yet future.

In the Second Psalm we have a prophecy of an equally far distant future, when Jehovah will put the Son in possession of the nations for His inheritance. Yet it is all in the present tense—in that everlasting NOW in which He alone dwells. I quote the first five verses as they are given in the revised version before me:

1. Why are the heathen in tumult,
And the nations muttering vainly?

2. Kings of the earth take their stand,
Princes are in council together
Against Jehovah and His Anointed.

3. "Let us burst their fetters,
And cast from us their bonds!"

4. The enthroned in high heaven laughs;
The Lord holdeth them in derision.

5. Then He speaketh to them in His anger;
In His wrath He putteth them in dismay.

In the old version the future tense is used in the 4th and 5th verses: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure." Unquestionably the prophecy in the 2d and 46th Psalms relates to the same grand consummation spoken of in Rev. xi. 15: "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven saying, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.'" The same to which Jesus pointed, saying, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; *and then shall the end come.*" And of the same far distant period was Isaiah speaking when he wrote, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bring the good tidings, that publishes peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publishes salvation, that sayeth unto Zion, 'Thy God reigneth!'" Yet at the very time in which we are now living, the feet of them who are publishing these good tidings, this gospel of the kingdom, are pressing the soil of

nearly every nation under heaven. We may, therefore, hope that the time is at hand; and that we may, as Jesus bids us, look up, and lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh.

Now, let us see by quoting from this revision a few verses of the 46th Psalm, how grand it is for a prophet to transport himself to a far-distant age, and describe the tremendous events which will then transpire as if he was himself gazing at them, and calling upon others to behold, and wonder, and rejoice:

8. Come, behold the doings of Jehovah,
What desolations He hath wrought in the earth;

9. He stilleth wars to earth's bounds;
He shivereth the bow, and breaketh the spear;
The chariots He burneth with fire

10. Cease ye, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations;
I will be exalted in the earth.

11. Jehovah of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our defence.

In the 20th verse of the 71st Psalm, as rendered by this translation, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body is beautifully set forth:

Thou that hast shown us distresses, many and grievous,
Wilt restore us unto life;

Yea, out of the depths of the earth,
Thou wilt bring us up again.

In the old version this verse reads thus: "Thou which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up

again from the depths of the earth." In the 73d the doctrine of immortal life and glory is taught in language as plain as it can be. I shall quote from verse 23 to 26, as they are given in the revised rendering, although the language is but little changed from that found in our Bibles:

23. But as for me, I am continually with Thee;
Thou holdest me by my right hand.

24. Thou wilt guide me with Thy counsel,
And afterwards receive me to glory.

25. Whom have I in heaven but Thee?
And having Thee, I delight not in the earth.

26. My flesh and my heart fail;
But God is the strength of my heart
And my portion forever.

These two closing quotations I make because I have heard men express doubt whether the doctrine of immortality is taught at all in the Old Testament. But here we have both "the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

For years I have been in the habit of reading the sacred Scriptures critically, and, I trust, devoutly, but only in the English language, for I understand no other; and I think I do no wrong in criticising the felicities and infelicities of expression employed by the translators. The slavish adherence to obsolete words, and to words which have changed their meaning in the last 270 years, *e.g.*, *let*, *prevent*, and even the retention of the orthography of the 17th century, for example, *shew* for *show*, has been to me a matter of surprise. The adherence to the Greek form of Hebrew names found in the Received

Version of the New Testament, where Joshua, the leader of Israel into Canaan, is twice changed to Jesus, Elisha to Eliseus, and others, thus puzzling and bewildering unlearned readers, is another example of this slavish adherence to old usages—to the letter that killeth.

I am fully persuaded that the method of putting the work of the translation and revision into the hands of companies of scholars, as was done under King James 1611, and now—1870–1884—under other companies, is a mistake. Wickliffe alone in the 13th century gave to the people of England a clear and vigorous translation of the Bible in the crude English of his day. Luther alone gave to the Germans a translation about 1560, which to this day stands, not only as a standard of pure and classic German, but which needs no revision. About the same time William Tindale, single-handed, made a translation of the New Testament into English, which was a most admirable production, and to which we are all indebted for the most felicitous portions of our Authorized Version. Not long ago I compared his rendering of what are called the beatitudes, found in the beginning of the 5th chapter of Matthew, with the Authorized Version, and found that the latter was copied almost verbatim from Tindale. When such work is committed to the hands of a company of scholars, the more timid and conservative—who are generally the least gifted—act as clogs and fetters upon the more highly gifted, and thus their work is marred and cramped and weakened, and the full spirit and force of the original is more or less lost. This is in a peculiar

sense true of such writings as the Psalms. Speaking of the forthcoming revision of the Old Testament, the author before me says—a remark already quoted in this article—"Those who wish and hope to see the thought of the original put forth in the clearest, strongest, and best English expression will not be gratified. It is only by independent, individual effort that such versions of the Psalms can be produced." I think he is right.

A CRIPPLED TRANSLATION.*

THE Eighty-fourth is one of the most beautiful of the Psalms—one to which every devout reader of the Bible often turns. "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" is its excellent opening, and the next three verses in the Authorized Version are grandly rendered into English. But the 5th, 6th, and 7th verses are strangely obscure in our Bibles, so that the mind of the reader labors in vain to gather any clear idea out of the language. Let us quote them:

"5. Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee, in whose heart *are* the ways *of them.*

"6. *Who* passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

"7. They go from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God."

In a new translation or revision of the Psalms just published, by Dr. John De Witt, a member of the Anglo-American company of revisers, who for the past twelve years have been engaged on a revision of the Old Testament—prepared with the hearty approbation of his associate revisers, these verses are rendered thus:

5. "O the blessedness of the men
Whose strength is in thee,
In whose heart are the highways to Zion!

* Written during his last illness.

6. "Passing through the vale of Weeping,
They make it a place of springs:
Yea, with blessings the early rain covereth it.

7. "They go forward from strength to strength,
Till each shall appear before God in Zion."

In this poetic form, following the original Hebrew, this author or reviser gives all the Psalms. He claims that his rendering is more faithful to the original than is the Authorized Version, as it certainly is clearer to the understanding of the English reader.

Now we turn to Dr. Watts to see how he renders those same verses in one of his happiest efforts:

"O happy souls that pray
Where God appoints to hear!
O happy men that pay
Their constant service there!
They praise Thee still;
And happy they, that love the way
To Zion's hill.

"They go from strength to strength
Through this dark vale of tears,
Till each arrives at length,
Till each in heaven appears;
O glorious seat,
When God our King shall thither bring
Our willing feet!"

Let the reader compare the reading of Dr. Watts with that of Dr. De Witt and see how closely they agree, and how clear is the thought in both. Both must have drawn directly from the Hebrew, otherwise such an agreement in the thought expressed

would have been impossible, for the imagery is very peculiar—so much so that King James' translators seem to have been unable to give the passage in language that could be understood.

Dr. De Witt is a professor in the Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, N. J. His work is exceedingly interesting, and worthy of the attention of Bible students. It is an individual effort, and is not crippled and rendered spiritless by the conservatism and timidity sure to be found among a score or more of associates. But it is not my purpose to speak at length of the book at this time, further than to point out the vast difference between the rendering of the 22d and the 23d Psalms. The latter, as it stands in our common Bibles, is as felicitous as it can be, so that Dr. De Witt, in his revision, has made hardly any change. But the 22d, which is among the grandest of the Messianic Psalms, is so translated that it is rarely read from the pulpit. About sixty years ago I heard Rev. David Blair, of Indiana, Pa., read it from the pulpit on a sacramental occasion with thrilling impressiveness; but never since have I heard it read from the pulpit. As it stands in this revised version, the first verse is given thus:

> "My God! my God!
> Why hast Thou forsaken me?
> Why art Thou afar from helping me?
> Afar from my suffering cry?"

In the old version this verse reads in prose form: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? why art Thou so far from helping me, and from the

words of my roaring?" Verses 9, 10, and 11 are thus rendered in this revision:

9. "Yea, Thou art He that caused me to be born,
That gave me confidence on my mother's breast.

10. "Upon Thee was I cast from my birth;
From my earliest breath Thou art my God.

11. "Be not far from me, for distress is near,
And there is none to help."

The language used in the translation of these verses would give no offence 270 years ago; but it requires revision to adapt it to our times, the sense being exactly the same. Verse 16 is rendered:

"For dogs have surrounded me;
A band of evil-doers hemmeth me in;
They pierce my hands and my feet."

Observe, this "suffering cry" of the agonized Saviour is put strictly in the present tense. It, like the first verse, is a cry of anguish immediately from the Cross.

MAN'S LIMITATIONS.

IN his mortal state man is hedged in within very narrow metes and bounds. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away," is the mournful language of Moses in the Ninetieth Psalm. In the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes Solomon portrays the frailty and brevity of human life in still more graphic terms. "What is your life?" says James; "a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Such is mortal life; but the very fact that such thoughts as these do enter the minds of mortals is proof that mortal life is not man's limit. If death ended all, then the human mind would never have conceived the idea of a life beyond. No aspirations, no hopes, no dread would ever have arisen in man's mind of anything in the future after death, any more than of the past before his birth. Both the past and the future would have been alike beyond his limit. But the fact that the idea of an existence beyond the grave is almost universal—held alike by Christians, Moslems, and Pagans—is the strongest argument that nature affords that the doctrine is true.

But natural reason can not penetrate the thick cloud that enshrouds a future state of existence. Even the old Hebrew prophets are almost silent on

the subject of a future state. "The dust shall return to the earth as it was," says Solomon, "and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." But what then? Solomon does not tell us, nor does Moses, or David, or Isaiah, or any of the prophets; and yet we learn that those who lived lives of faith from Abel all the way down through the Old Testament history sought a better country than earth afforded, "that is a heavenly country" (Heb. xi. 16), and David's joyful exclamation was, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness!"

But life and immortality were brought clearly to light when Christ came. It was like the rising of the sun upon a world enshrouded in the gloom of night. There had been twinkling stars all through that long night of forty centuries. Their light guided the people of God in their pilgrimages, and God whom they loved and served made that light sufficient for them.

The full and clear revelation of the resurrection of the body and of everlasting life; the assurance that the redeemed shall be ever with their Lord; that they shall see Him as He is, and be made like Him; the fact that Jesus prayed just before He suffered, "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory"; and that He said to His disciples, and through them to all believers, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also," opens up so inconceivably glorious a prospect to man—raised from the dead, im-

mortal, forever with the Lord, seeing Him as He is, becoming more and more like Him, His brethren, His joint heirs, partners of His throne, partakers of His divine nature—where can any limit be set? Yet as God is infinite, and as man at the highest advancement he can ever make must necessarily be finite, an infinite distance must always remain between them. As the period through which he shall have existed must always be measurable, and as the period still before him can not in the slightest degree be diminished, after ages beyond all that the arithmetic of earth or heaven can compute shall have rolled behind him, it is plain that in this sense man is absolutely an unlimited being—not infinite, but unlimited. There is a vast difference between the two words—an infinite difference; although it would not be incorrect to apply the weaker term even to the Supreme Being.

It is as impossible for us, with our present capacities, to fathom the depth, the grandeur, or the ever increasing glory and blessedness involved in the term Eternal Life, as it is to grasp the infinite or to measure eternity. But God has in Christ swept away all clouds, so that we can look into that limitless hereafter as we can look past the stars into the unbounded fields of space; and it is enough to know that in that boundless hereafter we shall be with the Lord—not wanderers, not strangers, but at home in our Father's house. But still it is true that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Much as our blessed Lord has told us, it is still but a glimpse of "the glory that shall be revealed in us." There is no end to that life; neither will there be

any end to the advancement of the redeemed in that life. In that direction the believer has no limit; but his course is onward and upward forever and ever; and it will forever be true in his case, at any point he can ever reach in that vast hereafter—"It doth not yet appear what we shall be!"

IS OUR NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CHRISTIC?

For a number of years past an earnest, but not large, body of Christian men, representing many denominations, have been striving to convince the American people that duty and safety both require that our National Constitution should be so amended that God shall be distinctly recognized as the source of all power and authority, the Holy Scriptures be taken as the expression of His will, and that Jesus Christ, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, shall be acknowledged as the Governor of nations. The effect of such an amendment would be to bring the government of this nation into harmony with the [illegible] majority of our people. The number of those whose consciences impel them to favor this amendment is rapidly increasing; and the day is not distant when the Declaration of this profession will not [illegible] the whole American people. Every citizen will be constrained to take one side or the other.

[illegible] proposed amendment [illegible] a union of Church [illegible] We [illegible] to show the difference between [illegible] the union of the State with the Church. The [illegible] between the branch of [illegible] the Church and the State, e. g.,

the Catholic in the Catholic states of Europe and America; the Episcopalian as in England; the Lutheran as in Germany, and as it was and perhaps is yet, in the Scandinavian states; and the Greek Church, as in Russia and Greece. These may serve as samples of that thing. Through these particular communions the State is supposed to be united to God and Christ, while other communions—as the Protestants in Catholic states, and the dissenters and Catholics in England, if tolerated at all, are supposed to be lying outside of the union, and have no part or lot in either Church or State as Christians, whatever they may have as citizens. In this system the link between God and the State—and the only one—is that particular Christian sect to which the State is united.

But the thing aimed at in this movement in our country is altogether different. It is proposed to unite the State directly to God—that the nation as such shall confess Him as its sovereign lawgiver in perfect independence of the Church. The State itself, for itself, independent of any ecclesiastical authority found on earth, shall make a religious confession of God—the God known as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—not as a Church, not through the Church, but immediately. The Church has its peculiar link which binds it to the throne of the Most High; the State shall have another, and one suited to it. In God, therefore, and nowhere else, the State and the Church will have one common centre, and through these widely different and independent links or bonds of union, both will receive blessings suited to them. The Church and

the State will thus be united in God—both will rest upon the same Rock; but they will not be coupled together. In this union there can be no priestly domination over the consciences of men.

But, it may be asked, are we not already, as a nation, united to the throne of God? To this I would say, Yes, in many respects we are. Our whole history, both as colonies and as states, is full of scattered professions of faith in the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. I need not specify, although it would be easy to do so. Many times as a people we have acknowledged God, and on no occasion have we expressly denied Him, as France did just before she entered upon her Reign of Terror. Yet at the very time and place where our confession ought to have been made we totally ignored Him—not denied Him, but passed Him by as though He had no part nor lot in our national life. We placed the crown, which of right belongs to Him, as the centre and source of all authority and power, upon the head of "We the people of the United States." This left our organic law, not positively, or in express terms, atheistic, but negatively so. Bold, bad men are now confidently claiming that it is positively atheistic; and that any legislation intended to maintain the least trace of Christianity—laws to enforce a proper observance of the Sabbath, the appointment by law of chaplains, etc., etc., are all in violation of this fundamental law. Although we do not yield to such arguments, it is somewhat difficult to meet them with the Constitution as it is. Perhaps it is well that atheists and other enemies of Christianity

should so argue; for it will do more than anything else to draw the attention of the American people to the fact that their organic law, great and admirable as it is, is not in harmony with the national life and conscience, and that it is their duty to bring it into harmony as soon as possible.

That the Constitution as it stands is negatively atheistic I believe; although some excellent men will not admit that much, and point to the formula, "In the year of our Lord," as being a kind of Christian confession. But that is a weak point and ought never to be pressed; for the phrase—whatever may have been its original force—is now but a conventional formula, used alike by believers and unbelievers. The omission of the acknowledgment of the Almighty, although we think that it does not leave the Constitution atheistic in a positive sense, was a great mistake, and the sooner it is put right the better.

How that omission came about is a question that has been much discussed. The story that Alexander Hamilton, when spoken to by one of his friends on the subject, accounted for the omission by saying, "Indeed, Doctor, we forgot it," is hardly credible. A more plausible reason can be found in the spirit of the popular mind at that particular juncture in the history of Christendom. For centuries the union of Church and State in Europe had lain as a heavy yoke upon the nations. In 1776, when our Declaration of Independence startled the world with new light and life, and with new ideas of what government ought to be, a mighty movement began, especially in France—a move-

ment in the right direction at first, and which in the period between 1776 and 1787 had grown prodigiously, but had not then culminated in the horrors of 1793. That sentiment was strongly felt on this side of the Atlantic. The leaders of thought in France saw in the unholy union of secular and sacerdotal power the secret of the strength of tyranny, and put forth their utmost efforts to break that union. In this they did right. But, unfortunately for France and for the world, those political philosophers were unable to discriminate and draw a line between Religion, as a grand abstract idea, and the Church, and between God and the men who claimed to be His representatives and ministers. Hence it was that they did not stop until not only the Church and the Priesthood, but Religion, and even God Himself, were swept out of the State, and it became not only secular, but positively atheistic. Soon afterward the miserable Republic expired in darkness, horror, and blood. Our Constitution, as before observed, was framed before the awful consummation; yet it was at the very time when that just battle against the union of Church and State was at its height. The American people were in strong sympathy with those who were struggling for freedom in France; and the sentiment of opposition to Church and State was as earnest here as it was there. At that time the men of America seemed to be as incapable of drawing a clear line of distinction between God and Religion, which is simply loyalty to God, on the one hand, and the Church with an organized priesthood on the other, as were the people of France. I am

old enough to remember hearing impassioned harangues in political meetings against "Church and State." About the year 1820 the American Sunday-school Union was formed in Philadelphia. The association applied to the Legislature of Pennsylvania for a charter; but the bill to grant it raised a wild storm of opposition, under the plea that it was but the entering wedge to a union of Church and State. Zealous patriots, who did not know what they were talking about, got off some flaming speeches for buncombe, and the bill was defeated. The Sunday-school Union, however, went on, with good old Paul Beck as their trustee, for some years, without a charter. Finally, when the politicians had got over that nonsense—I think it was in 1824—a charter was granted, and the Sunday-school Union has now gone on in its beneficent work for fifty-five years; but Church and State are not yet united.

Our statesmen, in framing the Constitution, aimed to make the government purely secular—not atheistic—to put it upon neutral ground as regards the Supreme Ruler of all; and in order to do so they simply ignored Him. But we have now discovered by experience that to ignore Him is to deny Him. We are beginning to see that Christ uttered a great truth when He said, "He that is not with me is against me." His active enemies among us have proved this by claiming that the Constitution favors their views and not ours, and that under its authority they have a right to "demand" that every trace of Christianity shall be eliminated from our laws and our governmental in-

stitutions. Our fancied neutral ground is slipping from under us like moving quicksand, and very soon we must, as a nation, either take hold of the Hand which led our fathers to these shores and to which they clung in childlike faith, or sink into the dark vortex of atheism.

A VERY COMMON DELUSION.

THERE is no delusion more common, more dangerous, or more senseless than this: "I do not profess to be a Christian, therefore I can do many things which it would be wrong for me to do if I were a professor; and I can leave undone many things which in that case I would be bound to do."

A ranker fallacy than this never entered the human mind; for God's law of right and wrong is fixed and irrevocable, and binding alike upon all, no matter whether we acknowledge our obligations to be governed by it or not. Our neglect or refusal to make a confession of our faith and of our obligation to obedience, while it is in itself a gross sin, does not in the slightest degree relax our obligation to the requirements of God's law. The professor and the non-professor are alike bound by it, and amenable to its penalties.

Suppose a man should plead, "I don't pretend to be an honest man; therefore I incur no guilt when I defraud my neighbor or steal his property." Or, "I don't profess to be a man of truth; therefore I can lie as much as I please with impunity." Or, "I never pretended to be a moral man, and for that reason I can blaspheme the name of my Maker, or indulge as I please in obscene language or conduct. In short, I am free to do just as I please and still be as good as I pretend to be. I

am no hypocrite." No argument is needed to show the absurdity of such reasoning as this; and yet it is just as rational as that which claims for a non-professor greater liberty than a professing Christian enjoys in the pursuit of the pleasures or profits of the world. The pleas offered in these supposed cases, instead of mitigating the depravity of the parties offering them, would only enhance it, and bring upon them deeper condemnation both from God and man; and for a man or woman to claim more liberty to indulge in sinful pleasures or practices than a professing Christian can claim is quite as unjustifiable. It is an attempt to take advantage of their own wrong, thus adding sin to sin.

The silly notion which many unthinking people cherish is that if they can only avoid the guilt of hypocrisy they are all right. Hypocrisy is bad, but this is even worse; for while the hypocrite acknowledges, at least professedly, God's right to rule over him, the other boldly and deliberately denies this right, and sets His authority at defiance. He denies Christ and His salvation, and says by his conduct that he has no need of Him.

SACRED SONGS OF THE CENTURIES.

SOMEBODY said, "Let me make the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws." If that could be said in the political world, with equal truth might it be said of the religious world, "Let me make its songs, and I care not who makes its dogmas." This thought came into my mind while reading a most interesting volume entitled "Evenings with the Sacred Poets; a series of Quiet Talks about the Singers and their Songs." Beginning with the sacred oracles, Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms, the author leads us down the ages, through the apostolic and early Church into the Greek and the Latin, the eastern and the western—through the mediæval period, commonly called the dark ages—and down through the Reformation to our own times, giving brief translations of the Greek and Latin hymns, some from the modern languages of continental Europe, and many from the rich stores of our own tongue. He also gives brief sketches of many of the writers. That which most impressed me was the true and fervent spirit of Christian faith and devotion which breathes in the sacred songs which have come down to us from the deep darkness of the mediæval period.

The earliest known Christian hymn is ascribed to Clement, Bishop of Alexandria, who suffered martyrdom A.D. 217. We shall give but the open-

ing verse, translated from the original Greek by Rev. Mr. Plumptre:

Shepherd of sheep that own
Their Master on the throne,
Rear up Thy children meek
With guileless lips to speak,
In hymn and song, Thy praise.
Guide of their infant ways,
O King of saints, O Lord!
Mighty, all-conquering word;
Son of the highest God,
Wielding His wisdom's rod;
Our stay when cares annoy,
Giver of endless joy;
Of all our mortal race
Saviour of boundless grace,—
O Jesus, hear!

Compressed into this one verse the reader will find all the grand truths of the Gospel expressed in childlike simplicity and living power.

We come down about two centuries later. Gregory of Nyssa, in an Evening Hymn, thus confesses his faith in the Divinity of Christ. It comes down to us from the troublous times of Julian the apostate, and from the strife of sects and heresies which in his day rent the Church. We can give but a few words:

Christ, my Lord, I come to bless Thee,
Now when day is veiled in night;
Thou who knowest no beginning,
Light of the Eternal Light!
Thou hast set the radiant heavens,
With Thy many lamps of brightness

Filling all the vaults above;
Day and night in turn subjecting
To a brotherhood of service,
And a mutual law of love!

We come now to the ninth century. St. John of Damascus gave to the Eastern Church this "Hymn of Victory," to be sung immediately after midnight on Easter morning:

'Tis the day of Resurrection! earth tell it all abroad!
The Passover of gladness! the Passover of God!
From death to life eternal, from earth unto the sky,
Our Christ hath brought us over, with hymns of victory!
Our hearts be pure from evil that we may see aright
The Lord in rays eternal of Resurrection light;
And listening to His accents, may hear so calm and plain
His own "All hail!" and, hearing, may raise the victor strain.
Now let the heavens be joyful; let earth her song begin;
Let the round world keep triumph, and all that is therein!
Invisible or visible, their notes let all things blend;
For Christ the Lord hath risen, our joy that hath no end!

From the deep darkness which covered the earth a thousand years ago, while Alfred the Great of England was on the throne doing all that one man could do to dissipate the gloom of ignorance and sacerdotal domination, this grand song of triumph, surpassing any effort of modern genius, was given to the benighted Church, and doubtless did much to keep alive the flame of true devotion in the hearts of the Lord's hidden ones of that day, and still darker days to come.

We now reach the Latin or Western Church. Ambrose, who lived in the fourth century, gave to

the Church many hymns, all full of pure doctrine and ardent devotion. We can give but a single verse:

O admirable mystery!
The sins of all are laid on Thee:
And Thou, to cleanse the world's deep stain,
As man, dost bear the sins of men.
What can be ever more sublime!
That grace might meet the guilt of time,
Love doth the bonds of fear undo,
And death restores our life anew!

The Venerable Bede, a Saxon monk of England, who lived from 672 to 735, and who gave to the Saxons a version of St. John's Gospel in their own language (for he lived before Rome forbade such a thing), was a fine Latin poet and wrote some hymns, a part of one of which, as translated by Mrs. Charles, is here given:

A hymn of glory let us sing:
New hymns throughout the world shall ring;
By a new way, none ever trod,
Christ mounteth to the throne of God,
Calm soaring through the radiant sky,
Mounting its dazzling summits high.
. . . . . .
May our affections thither tend,
And thither constantly ascend,—
Where, seated on the Father's throne,
Thee reigning in the heavens we own;
And as the countless ages flee,
May all our glory be in Thee!

Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, France, was an ascetic of the severest order, yet one of the best men of his day. He was born A.D. 1091. In 1140

he had a controversy with the rationalistic Abelard, which so pleased the reigning pontiff that he hailed him as "the champion of the orthodoxy of his day." As a writer of sacred lyrics he had few equals, and the spirit of these productions is so pure that they might with profit be introduced into the most orthodox of Protestant worship, as indeed some of them are. Here is one:

Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou fount of life, Thou Light of men,
From the best bliss that earth imparts,
We turn, unfilled, to Thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
To them that seek Thee, Thou art good;
To them that find Thee, all in all.

We taste Thee, O Thou Living Bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the Fountain-head,
And thirst our souls on Thee to fill.

Our restless spirits yearn for Thee,
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;
Glad, when Thy gracious smile we see;
Blest when our faith can hold Thee fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay!
Make all our moments calm and bright;
Chase the dark night of sin away,
Shed o'er the world Thy holy light.

Bernard of Cluny, a contemporary of the other Bernard just quoted, is the author of "Jerusalem the Golden," well known to most readers, "lines,

perhaps unparalleled for their energy, fervor, and sublimity." Robert, king of France, who lived about the same time, wrote a beautiful hymn, entitled "*Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*" It has five verses; we quote but one:

What is arid, fresh bedew,
What is sordid, cleanse anew,
Balm on the wounded pour;
What is rigid, gently bend;
On what is cold, Thy fervor send;
What has strayed, restore.

Cardinal Damiano, Bishop of Ostia, a zealous moral reformer, died A.D. 1071. The great hymn on the Joys of Paradise, often attributed to Augustine, is his. We have only room for a few of the closing lines:

Ever filled and ever seeking,
What they have they still desire;
Hunger there shall fret them never;
Nor satiety shall tire;
Still enjoying whilst aspiring,
In their joy they still aspire.

There the new song, new forever,
Those melodious voices sing;
Ceaseless streams of fullest music
Through those blessèd regions ring—
Crownèd victors ever bringing
Praises worthy of the King.

Now we come down to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when Mariolatry and the invocation of saints—that hugest of the heresies of the Romish

Church—first became prevalent; when hard dogmas on one side, and the lust of sacerdotal domination on the other, cast their galling fetters over an ignorant and superstitious world; when through the horrors of purgatorial fires a lurid hope glimmered upon the affrighted consciences of sinners; when painful penances were substituted for the all-cleansing blood of the Redeemer; when money paid for holy uses could purchase exemption from the penalty of sin, and indulgences began to be hawked about as wares in the market—then it was that the spirit of sacred song began to wane in purity. Dread supplanted joy in the Christian heart, and trusting love gave place to trembling deprecation. For an example of this sad change I need only point to "*Dies Iræ*" (Day of Wrath), a hymn so much admired, and which so many scholars have labored to translate from the original Latin. I freely admit its terrific power and its agonizing pleadings; but still I can not admire it. It was in the same era that Dante's Inferno was given to the world—a gift of very questionable value, whatever scholars may say.

But all these horrible departures from the truth as it is in Jesus seemed to cluster around that central abomination, Mariolatry. Hymns in praise of Mary the mother of God began to be thrown out to supplant the grand old praises of the Son of God, and thus the last citadel of Gospel truth was captured. In view of such a state of things—when He who walks among the golden candlesticks sees His meek and lowly and now sainted mother thrust into His seat by priests who bear His name, His

own awful words, spoken long ago at the marriage in Cana, come back to our minds with tremendous force—"Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Surely it was time for the Reformation; and very soon it did come. But still it is pleasant and cheering to call back those beautiful songs which scattered the deep darkness of seven or eight centuries of what we perhaps too carelessly call the dark ages. They come down to us through the chaos of ignorance, superstition, metaphysical jargon, and ecclesiastical turbulence, to show us that the people of those days had more and purer light than we are in the habit of supposing.

The fountain of true Christian song, which had been stopped up by the rubbish of the two last and darkest centuries, burst out afresh at the Reformation. The lion-hearted Luther, with all the rough and rugged grandeur of his nature, was a sweet and eloquent singer, and so was the gentler Zwingle of Switzerland. Indeed there was a host of gifted men raised up to give to the people songs in which were embodied the precious truths of a pure gospel. Song was perhaps the mightiest instrumentality which God employed in that great purgation of His Church. Among those singers we may name Neander, Gustavus Adolphus, and one Hans Sachs, a shoemaker of Nuremberg. But there were many others. I wish I had room for several of those glowing productions; but I must content myself with the two concluding stanzas of Sachs' celebrated funeral hymn translated from the German:

> Now of a lasting home possessed,
> He goes to seek a deeper rest;

Good-night! the day was sultry here,
In toil and fear;
Good-night!—the night is cool and clear.

Chime on, ye bells! Again begin,
And ring the Sabbath morning in;
The laborer's week-day work is done,
The rest begun,
Which Christ has for His people won!

CALL YOU THIS CHANCE?

THE writer had four sons in the service during the war of the Rebellion. John S. Copley, the eldest of the four, was killed in the battle of South Mountain, in Maryland, on the 14th of September, 1862. He was a member of Company A, 9th Pennsylvania Reserves, a good man, and a sincere Christian. Of his death I was able to answer, "It is well."

The next in age was Albert, a member of the 78th Pennsylvania volunteers. In character he was like his brother. At the battle of Stone River, in Tennessee, he was wounded by an exploded shell and captured. He and his fellow-prisoners were put on board a train and carried southward nearly to the border of Florida. There they were turned back, to be taken to Richmond, because some Union forces had in the meantime come near to that part of the Gulf States.

Although not mortally wounded, 1,200 miles of continuous travelling was more than he was able to bear. When the returning train got as far as Knoxville, Tenn., he was taken off and put into a hospital. There he wrote me a short letter, giving me the above facts. He spoke hopefully of his recovery; but very soon afterward another letter from some one there informed me of his

death. But that was all. I wrote to his captain, and to Gen. Jas. S. Negley, then in command of his division. Both returned kind replies, but could give me no information subsequent to his capture.

During that war, as many people will remember, a band of generous men and women organized for the purpose of giving a good meal to every regiment which passed through Pittsburgh, no matter what the hour might be. A few weeks after Albert's death I learned that a regiment in transit from west to east would be at the City Hall about midnight that night. I lived in Allegheny City at the time, and had no active part in that good work. But still I felt that I must go over that night and see "the boys."

When I entered the hall I found them around the long tables to the number of ten or twelve hundred, all highly pleased, as if they enjoyed their bountiful warm supper. I stood near the entrance and looked on until they were through and had begun to gather into groups. Then I walked down among them, but spoke to none until I noticed a good-looking young man standing alone. I went to him and entered into conversation. He told me that he was a member of an Ohio regiment, giving its number, and that he belonged to what was known as the Army of the Cumberland. "Did you ever meet any of the men of the 78th Pennsylvania?" I asked. "Yes," he replied; "we lay for some time alongside of that regiment, and I got acquainted with a good many of the boys." "Did

you know a man named Albert Copley?" He started at the question, and exclaimed, "Albert Copley! Why, I was lying beside him in the hospital when he died." He then told me that he was captured at the same time—that they travelled all that round in the same car—that he dressed Albert's wound daily as well as he could—that before reaching Knoxville he himself took sick—that both were put into the same hospital, and occupied couches side by side. He said Albert was in a fair way of recovery until erysipelas set in, which soon terminated in death. He spoke of his resignation, cheerfulness, and hopefulness, and of his gratitude to his nurse, who had been very kind to him. I inquired of him if he knew anything of his grave; but he did not, for he was too sick to attend his funeral. He told me that Albert gave that nurse what little he had in return for his unwearying kindness.

My good soldier friend then told me that he had a slight wound on the ankle which was giving him trouble, and inquired if there was any chance of having it dressed. I at once took him into a little room in the corner of the hall where there were all needed appliances for such a purpose. Believe me that I was glad that I was thus able to make our meeting a mutual benefit.

Now what shall we say to all this? If you ask why I went over at all at that unseasonable hour, I can not tell you. And when I got there, was it *chance* that led me to the only man among ten or twelve hundred who was able to give me the infor-

mation for which I so earnestly yearned? They who please may think so and say so; but I feel that it would be wicked in me to do either. Dear reader, you have my simple story—interpret it as may seem best to yourselves.

RECOLLECTIONS OF BOYHOOD.

AS men grow old their earliest recollections come back more clearly than do the memories of middle life. At least I find it to be so with myself, and I suppose that it is more or less so with all. My own memory has one peculiarity, and that is, that the great events which transpired while I was a boy are blended and associated with my own personal history, so that the recollection of one brings with it that of the other. If in reading history, which fell within the range of my own memory—say seventy years—I come upon a particular date, I can recall my own history at that day. In this way I have an accurate chronological memory without recourse to written or printed memoranda of any kind.

I now go back to 1810, to my first school. That was long before there were any laws regulating education. In that sparsely settled region the neighbors got together and put up a school-house —a log-cabin of the most primitive kind. To take the trees where nature had planted them and put up the house and finish it ready for occupancy was only one day's work for about twenty men, and it cost not one cent of money. I mean ours did not. There was not in that house an inch of sawed lumber, nor a nail, nor a single light of glass, nor anything whatever but what was found within a hundred yards of the site. The roof was of clapboards ;

the floors, the seats, and even the writing-desk, were made of split logs hewed smooth on the split side. We called them puncheons, but it was not a correct use of the word. At the end of the one room a huge fire-place was built, made up of a judicious combination of small logs, stones, and clay. But the school, of which I am about to tell you, was held in the summer, so that the fire-place served as a nice alcove in which the "master" could sit and smoke after he had finished hearing the lessons all round.

Our dominie that summer was a bachelor named Shields, of perhaps sixty years of age, a brother of a neighboring farmer; and being past the age for hard labor, he was chosen to teach the young ones "the rudiments." He was good-natured and kind, and magnified his office by a strict code of laws; and what the sword is in the hands of the magistrate the rod was in his—a terror to evil-doers. He was fully persuaded of his duty to wield it on all proper occasions, and they were very frequent. Even in this he was systematic. His was no ordinary thrashing. The girls, to be sure, had to take their share in the ordinary way; but the boys were invariably "horsed." This requires some explanation. A boy when observed to be doing something that he ought not to do—whispering, for example—was called up, and another boy was called up with him to play the part of horse. The offender was then ordered to mount upon the back of the horse-boy, who would stoop a little, and thus bring into prominence the proper place to apply the rod; and the turpitude of the offence

would determine whether there should be few or many stripes. If two boys offended at once, which was often the case, they played the part of horse and rider interchangeably. Every day this ridiculous scene was enacted, perhaps a dozen times.

The grave dignity with which this administration of law was carried on, and the total absence of anything like malice or cruelty on the part of the executive, was the most amusing part of it, as I now see it; but at that time, being under seven years of age, I thought it all right—that it was a part of the work of education. But the old man evidently enjoyed it. One morning a timid little fellow put in his first appearance. I was sitting near the "master," and remember accurately every word of the conversation between him and the boy.

"Well, my boy, you've come to school?" "Yes—sur-r-r." "Do you like to come to school?" "Yes—sur-r-r." "Can you read?" "No—sur-r-r." "Well, you must try and larn." (Then a pause.) "But, my boy, was you ever horsed?" "No-o-o—sur," replied the poor little fellow, tremblingly. "Well, I think we'll begin with that."

He then called up another little boy, upon whose back the neophyte was directed to climb. The rod was then applied, but so gently as not to hurt him at all. The little fellow was then in the kindest manner set to work out the mysteries of the alphabet.

The first work every morning was to hear lessons, singly or in classes. The alphabet, spelling, and reading comprised all the studies in the school. There was no writing, no arithmetic. This round

of lessons required over an hour, perhaps two hours. Then the dominie would take his stool and set it in the big fire-place; get out his pipe, his tobacco-pouch, his flint, steel, and punk, fill his pipe, strike fire, light his pipe, and settle himself for a good smoke.

"Now, children, let me hear you read," was the next command, while the old gentleman's face beamed with benevolence and satisfaction. Up to that moment the pupils had sat in silence watching the interesting operation of striking fire and lighting the pipe. But the moment the word was given to read, every voice in the house opened in the highest key it could reach, whether its owner was at the A, B, C's, or spelling, or reading the lesson of the day. The din may be imagined, but I can not describe it, and it was kept up as long as the pipe held out. I was so young that I was not expected to join in the "reading," so I sat and watched and listened.

I did not go to that school long, and of course made no progress. In 1812 we had another teacher in the same house altogether different, and with him I did make progress, as did most of the others. Still it was a school of a low order compared with the common schools of the present day. We had no reading-books other than the Old and New Testaments. The latter was principally used; and I am not sure that the Readers which were subsequently introduced have been any improvement upon that best of all books. Much of my own familiarity with the Scriptures I can trace back tc those school readings.

About 1810 a speller was compiled in Pittsburgh, and published by Cramer, Spear & Eichbaum, called the "United States Spelling-Book." The reading lessons in it were made up largely from the Scriptures, partly from the writings of Solomon, and partly from the parables of our Lord. That they exerted an excellent influence upon the young mind I know, for it was the book I used. If I ever knew who was the compiler of that book I have forgotten.

In the period of which I have been speaking the war of 1812 was going on; and the destruction of Campbell's mill and the unfortunate operations on the river Raisin, happening about the same time, are yet associated in my mind. The wars of the first Napoleon were also going on, and interested the people greatly, as the slow-going ships of that day brought news forty to sixty days old at long intervals. The burning of Moscow was the first event in those great wars which arrested my attention strongly. A weekly newspaper, printed in Greensburg, was taken in our family; and well do I remember how our neighbors gathered in to hear the news of that terrible campaign of Bonaparte, as we called him, to the ancient capital of Russia, of the destruction of the city, and of his disastrous retreat. So the memories of home affairs are associated with those great events, but not confused.

The great comet of 1811 is a clearer and more vivid memory than if I had seen it forty years later in life. Night after night I stood out and gazed at the grand spectacle, as it stretched its gradually widening tail from near the horizon to the zenith,

and several degrees beyond it. My father, who was well versed in astronomy, explained its nature as far as we could understand it; and when he told us that it was then moving at the rate of sixteen thousand miles a minute, the awful sublimity of the heavenly bodies impressed my mind as only first impressions can.

Some weeks before the great comet made its appearance we had an annular eclipse of the sun, of which our locality must have been exactly the centre. While it was coming on we were directed by our mother to fill a wide iron kettle with clear water; and, as the air was calm, the surface was perfectly still and served as a mirror, yet did not reflect so much light as to injure the eyes. In that we watched its progress, until all that remained of the sun was a delicate ring around the dark body of the moon as fine as a thread, but which did not continue an unbroken ring for more than half a minute. While it did continue it was inexpressibly beautiful. As the moon advanced the ring broke into what for a moment seemed to be a line of brilliant drops, and then the sun took the form of a long and delicate crescent. From that to the end the phenomenon passed through the regular phases common to all eclipses.

The year 1811 was remarkable in many respects. It began with the embargo and the dark cloud of impending war, which broke upon an ill-prepared country the following year. Next followed the tremendous earthquake which shook a large portion of the valley of the Mississippi, especially in the then Territories of Mississippi and Missouri. Then

followed the remarkable annular eclipse before spoken of. This was soon followed by the comet of which I have spoken, which did not disappear until the last of November. And then, on the night before Christmas, came the horrible holocaust of the Richmond theatre, where about eighty persons of the wealthy and cultivated classes of that city were burned to death. In those slow, dull times that fearful catastrophe sent a thrill of horror throughout the whole country. Thus closed that melancholy year, to be followed by three more of warfare, for which the country was not prepared, and which it would not have gone into but for the intrigues set on foot by Napoleon the Great.

A MAP OF THE WORLD, A.D. 1490.

TWO years before Christopher Colon, or Columbus, as he is more commonly called, set sail on his first voyage of discovery, Herr Martin Behaim, of Nuremburg, constructed a globe fifty-four centimetres in diameter. It is a wooden ball covered with pasteboard, on which is drawn a map of the world as far as it was then known. It is still in existence, and is a valuable relic.

I have now before me an engraving of a photograph of this globe. The entire surface of the globe is covered with lands and seas, continents, oceans, and islands, some real and some imaginary. According to this map at least one-half of our globe is land. What was then known of its surface is delineated so as to be easily recognizable, but still very inaccurate. Between the western coast of Europe and Africa, on one side, and Asia, or what was then vaguely known as India, on the other side, stretched the only wide ocean on that map; but it is nameless. America, both North and South, was then unknown, and of course has no place on Herr Behaim's globe. This ocean, in its proportion to the whole globe, is not much wider than the Atlantic is now known to be. There is no ocean corresponding to the Pacific; but the continent of Asia, which is also nameless, is made to stretch eastward toward the western coast of Europe almost as far as to

where our Atlantic coast is, leaving an ocean but little wider than the Atlantic, as before remarked.

Columbus supposed that by sailing westward across this only great ocean he could reach the eastern coast of Asia, or India; and when he first touched America he imagined that he had reached India; hence the terms retained to this day of the "West *India* islands." The prefix "West" was adopted after the mistake was discovered. It was owing to the same mistake that the term *Indians* was given to the aborigines of America. The truth is, the men of that day had no correct idea of the size of this planet, or of what an enormous proportion of it is covered with water—nearly three-fourths.

The islands laid down on that then unknown ocean are all imaginary except England, Ireland, Iceland, the Azores, and a few others not far from the coast of Europe and Africa; and even in that region there are some laid down which have no existence. But when we get over toward Asia there are any number of them laid down—some quite large—not one of which has any real existence. The great island or continent of Australia is not laid down at all, neither is Borneo; but where Australia ought to be there are six or seven large islands, some of which are named; but not one correct either in location or form. The Japanese islands are not laid down; but there are numerous islands, one quite large, much more distant from the Asiatic coast than Japan is. Korea is not laid down at all.

South of India we have the "*Oceanicus Indicus*

Orientalis"; but it is a much smaller body of water than the Indian Ocean; for Africa is made to cut deep into it by a monstrous trend eastward. Madagascar is named; but it is put altogether out of shape by a large peninsula running far eastward from its southeast corner. South of Madagascar is another island of equal size called Zanzibar. There is no such island there. The continent of Asia is made to run southward to the tropic of Capricorn, leaving the Indian Ocean almost an inland sea.

The Red Sea is correctly located; but it is about four times as wide as it really is, and is very crooked and irregular on its western shore. The Persian Gulf is laid down as an inland lake far larger than it ought to be, and stretching from east to west. The Mediterranean Sea is pretty correctly laid down. The Caspian Sea is given, with its greatest length east and west. It is too small, and has too many rivers flowing into it. The Black Sea and the Baltic are made to come too close together. Indeed all Europe seems to be compressed into a little corner, except that it is made to stretch almost to the North Pole. Great Britain and Ireland are given with a good deal of correctness as to size and form, which can not be said of France, Spain, and Italy.

This was the utmost reach of geographical knowledge less than four hundred years ago. When Rome was at the zenith of its power, the people knew still less about the surface of this world, of which they boasted of being the masters. Those of Greece, with all their philosophy, knew still less. When Columbus proposed to reach India by sail-

ing westward, some of the ecclesiastics of that day scouted at the idea—arguing that if he should sail on he would come to the end, the border, the edge of the world, or, as boys sometimes say, "the jumping-off-place."

FORMER DAYS AND THESE.

THERE are few things more interesting to a thoughtful mind than to note the development and growth of Christianity in the world from the time the reformers broke the shackles of more than a thousand years and gave to the Scriptures of Truth free course. This subject is to be investigated partly from printed history, from treatises on dogmatic theology more or less elaborate, from the controversies between the various sects which have sprung up, and from personal observation running through a long life. As the writer has been a close observer during a period of more than sixty years—years the most active and progressive the Christian world ever saw—his testimony may be worthy of perusal by his younger brethren.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were remarkable for the depth of study of religious truth; for building up of elaborate systems of theology; for long, earnest, and sometimes heated controversy over dogmas which had in them far more of the wisdom of this world than of the spirit, the simplicity, and the gentleness of Christ. Questions, the relative importance of which were like the mint, anise, and cummin of which the Saviour speaks, were earnestly discussed; while the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith

were not so much insisted upon. Yet in this way the generations then passing over the stage were led to think and talk much on religious subjects, and knowledge, even though cribbed and confined in narrow dogmatic bounds, was vastly increased. At the same time infidelity, bald, undisguised, and blasphemous, ran riot over the whole Christian world both Catholic and Protestant.

Yet amid all this jarring oppugnancy among warring sects, this prevalence of every form of wickedness, this wave of unbelief which plunged France into a sea of blood and England into dead formalism, the Holy Spirit operated with such power on some hearts that our language was made rich in those undying songs of praise, and in innumerable devout writings, the influence of which is greater to-day than it was during the centuries in which they were produced. Watts, Cowper, Toplady, Newton, Charles Wesley, and a host of other hymnists, are better known to-day, and far more widely sung, than they were a hundred years ago. The Wesleys, Bunyan, Whitfield, the Tenants, Jonathan Edwards, and many other lesser lights, were instrumental in the kindling of a spirit of devotion which to this day has not lost its power, nor will that spirit die out until the Gospel shall be proclaimed to every nation under heaven.

This brings us to the beginning of the present century, and to men some of whom I knew. The first three years of the century were marked by a marvellous awakening which had some strange and peculiar features, but which was a genuine work of grace. It was like the stirring among the dry bones

of which Ezekiel tells us, and a great army of active and working Christians was the result. Then a spirit of aggressive Christian work was inaugurated. The great commission of the Master, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, was remembered and obeyed. Earnest men went abroad to carry the glad tidings to many peoples who had until then sat in darkness. The British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society were organized, which have given the Scriptures to the world in one language after another as fast as translations could be made. This work has gone on with ever increasing force until hundreds of millions of copies have been given in hundreds of languages to nearly every nation of earth.

Well do I remember when the first missionaries went to the degraded savages of the Sandwich Islands amid the jeers of an unbelieving world; while Henry Martyn, Carey, Judson, Newell, and others were laboring in India and the adjacent countries, and the Moravians were braving the rigors of the Greenland climate, and sharing in the toils of African slaves under the burning sun of the West India islands. For full sixty years I have watched this labor of love, this sore trial of faith, and have lived to see it successful in a measure which at first I little hoped to see in my day.

Still, during the earlier years of this century the old warfare of the opposing sects was vigorously maintained by some men who occupied the home pulpits. Arminians poured their shot into the Calvinistic camps, which were just as vigorously re-

turned from the Calvinistic batteries. All this was done out of honest zeal for the truth as each party understood it. The main trouble was that neither of the parties quite understood the other. In their creeds they stood apart; but in their prayers and songs of praise they ran together, and thus their asperities gradually wore away until now they have in a good degree come to see eye to eye.

This early breaking up of Protestant Christendom into a multitude of sects, while it was a bar to progress in the religious world, has not been an unmixed evil. Had Christians been all of one mind dogmatically they would most likely have all gone to sleep together. Life is better than death, even if that life gives some of its energies to contention and strife. Our United Presbyterian brethren, for example, are full of life, true life, notwithstanding their present battle among themselves over instrumental music.

In those early times the pulpit was almost the only religious agency. There were no Sabbath-schools, no stated times for Christians to meet for prayer and conference. There was no religious press. Beyond the Bible and the Catechism there was but little Christian literature. The more advanced families in means and intelligence had Scott's or Henry's Commentaries, and perhaps some volumes of sermons, all of which were good so far as they went. But there were no organized associations except in a few churches, for the spread of the Gospel either at home or abroad. But the foundations were nevertheless well laid; and early in the present century the fruit which God's Word

is sure to produce began to appear. The Bible and Tract Societies were established. Missions to the heathen world began and were pressed on with ever-increasing zeal. Sabbath-schools multiplied rapidly and soon became systematized in a national union. Religious papers made their first appearance in the second decade of the century. Earnest protests against the almost universal drinking usages of the people began to be uttered, and this sentiment took form in associations and in pledges of total abstinence. In 1818 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church gave out one of the most eloquent deliverances ever uttered against the system of African slavery, not only as a sin against God and man, but "a foul blot upon our national escutcheon." Although, for prudential reasons, hardly justifiable, the Church afterward softened its official protest, the righteousness and truth of that first utterance never ceased to press home upon the conscience of Christians.

This new life and activity brought about a new state of things religiously. Christians of opposing sects flowed together and found that they were brethren, not enemies. Merely dogmatic controversy began to abate, and the pulpits changed from ecclesiastical batteries to fountains of essential, practical, and profitable truth.

The Church of Christ is like a tree. It needs a sturdy trunk; and the strong and rugged controversialists of the past two centuries were necessary to impart that strength. Now the fruit-bearing time has come. We still admire the stout and vigorous trunk; but if we would please ourselves

by gazing at or partaking of the fruit we must look for it among the slender twigs. With the steadily increasing intelligence which has been poured into the popular mind, less of strictly doctrinal or dogmatic preaching was needed; and Christians were more and more called upon to show their faith by their works. Through more than threescore years I have watched this change with great satisfaction. "Say not thou," says Solomon, "what is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this." That meets the case we are discussing exactly. Such questions are not wise. The former days were good days. They were days for foundation work, to use an architectural figure. They were necessary, moreover, to use another figure, for the vigorous growth of those strong trunks which, in later years, are beginning to bear much fruit, to the glory of Him who orders all things well. Everything is beautiful and useful in its season; and when the fruit-bearing time is come our feelings are more gratified at the sight of richly laden branches than at that of the noble trunk out of which they spring—a trunk made strong by the buffetings of many a storm and many a winter. Antagonism is essential to development both in nature and in grace; and that antagonism was found both in battling with outside infidelity and in the conflicting dogmas in the Church itself. Had there been no antagonism, no sectarian controversy, in the Christian world during the comparatively dark period succeeding the Reformation, the whole Church might have sunk into lethargy and stagnation. That rough and militant

period was good in its season; *but it would not be good to bring it back again.*

But is the pulpit of the present day equal in power and efficiency to that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries? Certainly; and more so, because it has in it more of the gentleness of Christ, more clear-sightedness to discern the comparative unimportance of questions which in former times set our good old zealous fathers by the ears. The warrior, bristling with arms and laden with armor, may look mightier than the husbandman who is plying his simpler and more useful implements. But is he greater? The truth is, you can not compare them; and the wise man, therefore, speaks truly when he says, "Thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this." The Church, since the Reformation, may be compared to Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the first eight or nine chapters of which are made up of the most vigorous doctrinal teachings, and then he goes off into the inculcation of the practical duties of life—the fruit, the application of these doctrines. Both are good, both essential; and he would be an unwise man who should undertake to determine which is the better division. The Church—I mean that portion which we term evangelical—is now established in the first, and is pressing on to reap the fruit of those saving doctrines. Daniel was speaking of these later times when he wrote: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL.

THE words of the apostle found in 1 Tim. vi. 8–11—especially verse 10—ought to be seriously pondered just now. "The love of money," he says, "is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." The mind of Paul was divinely guided when he wrote these words, in which he denounces covetousness, or the love of money, as "the root of all evil." He does not say that this thing is merely an evil—one evil among many—but that it is the root of all evil.

We all agree that intemperance is an evil. The best people of the age are battling with it vigorously, but not with that measure of success that we could wish. It seems to be too strong for them. We may ask, as Delilah asked Samson, "Wherein does its great strength lie?" It is not in the fondness of men for strong drink; but in the love of money. Clearly that is the root of this evil. It is that love which plants drinking-houses along our streets so thickly that the citizen is ashamed of them, even if he lays claim to no higher virtue than common decency. Men of low moral principle, men who regard money as the chief good, and therefore love it supremely, go into that injurious business, not because they think it right, but because they see that there is money in it. With

them the love of money is the master passion. Could we only subdue that debasing spring of action, the present public drinking usages of society would be prohibited by almost universal consent. Nay, the very men who engage in that low calling of catering to a depraved and ruinous appetite would quit it at once. Thus we see that this terrible evil has its root in covetousness, and is for that reason hard to overcome.

But an evil greater than that of intemperance, one which springs from the same root, is now prevailing among us to an alarming extent—I mean the vice of gambling. It seems to be rapidly taking possession of almost everything. Men of all classes and professions engage in it. Even the bread we eat, before it can pass from the hand of the producer to that of the consumer, is made to go through the opposing forces of what, in the brutal slang of the exchange, are termed "bulls" and "bears," and its price enhanced for their benefit. The oil which a bountiful Creator, in the far-gone ages of this planet, stored up for the benefit of the race, is also seized upon by gamblers and made the occasion of profit and loss and of incalculable demoralization. The gigantic scenes of gambling in what are called "margins," the frenzy, the madness, the ever-changing fortunes of the operators in oil, or what represents oil, are but so many indexes of the fearful progress which this evil is making in our country.

The regular and perpetual dealing in stocks and other securities—some of which, however, is perfectly legitimate—which is carried on in all our

cities is, for the most part, mere gambling, and terribly injurious to those engaged, whether they win or lose. Where that business is carried on, the strong language of the prophet applies with awful force—"Truth is fallen in the street, and equity can not enter." Selfishness is raised to sevenfold intensity, and the hearts of men are hardened to the uttermost.

Even the healthful recreations of social life have not escaped this insatiate monster. The invigorating exercises of rowing or ball-playing can hardly be engaged in without the low and debasing accompaniment of gambling. The speed of horses can not be tested without the passage of money from hand to hand. We can not choose men to office by our ballots without the element of gambling entering into the business in the form of bets. So prone, indeed, are some people to this vice that it can only with difficulty be kept out of our church fairs, where the greed of money, even for a good cause, overcomes the better principles of those who ought to be, and possibly are, Christians. There it takes the apparently harmless guise of some form of lottery, and is purely a game of chance. Still it is gambling and nothing else.

What are called "corners" in any specific commodity, be it wheat or other grain, or pork, or oil, or some particular article in the grocery line, as coffee, tea, sugar—any one of such like commodities—have become alarmingly common. A ring of men who are able to command large masses of money conspire together to buy up all of the particular commodity upon which they agree to oper-

ate; then, having swept the market, they force up the price upon all outside dealers and consumers, regardless of the distress of the poor, or of anybody's interests save their own. They may, if they have strength to handle the gigantic operation, make enormous profits; but if not, their losses may be correspondingly heavy. It is a hazardous game, and one of the meanest and most iniquitous that men can engage in. But such is the strength of avarice, when it is suffered to become the ruling passion, that no dangers can affright it, no considerations of honor, honesty, humanity, protest of conscience, or fear of God can stand before it.

Milton, in his great epic of "Paradise Lost," in delineating the council of devils in the infernal regions, draws the individual characters of several of them. They are all bad enough; but Mammon is portrayed as the lowest, the meanest, the most grovelling and sordid of the lot. That oil exchange in Pittsburgh, where not a few men recently pierced themselves through with many sorrows, and will probably continue to do so, is one of the temples where this detestable demon is worshipped. After witnessing one of those wild and frantic scenes recently enacted there, or reading accounts of them as given in the daily papers, how tremendously true and forcible do the words of Jesus come home to the heart—"Ye can not serve God and Mammon."

But while contemplating these gross outbreakings of depravity under the impulse of this master passion, let us not forget that the grip of avarice upon the purse—filled, it may be, with the proceeds of

laborious industry or honorable trade—may be so tight as to deserve the contempt and execration not of good men only, but of the bad—but whose badness happens to be of a different type. The last, although he may be covetous, and perchance a gambler, a swindler, a forger, or even a thief, may be, on his low plane, free, and even generous in his expenditures; while the other, although honest so far as strict legal right and wrong go, may hold on to his possessions with a grasp so tenacious as to bring him justly under the charge of being a parsimonious person, a niggard, or even a miser. There is no shoot springing up from this root of all evil more deadly than this. No form of human depravity is more hopeless.

This last form of covetousness—which indeed is the very root itself—creeps insidiously into the character. A case of this deadly moral disease, which fell under my own observation, ended in one of the saddest of moral wrecks I ever knew. An intimate acquaintance with the man of whom I speak ran through a period of more than half a century. When I first knew him he had just gone into business on a very moderate capital. He was an intelligent, lively, and upright man, strictly temperate, and closely attentive to business. Being well read and of an intellectual turn, he was, while a young man, an agreeable and profitable companion, and many a pleasant evening I spent in his company. In his business he had uninterrupted prosperity, so that in process of time his wealth amounted to hundreds of thousands. But his parsimony—hardly noticeable in early life—grew with

his wealth, until at length he took no interest in anything except money. Heart and brain were alike shrivelled up by one all-absorbing passion. His well-invested means continued to accumulate; yet at times he would distress himself with visions of impending poverty. For twenty-five years I watched the progress of this wretched moral malady, which grew more and more aggravated, until at about the age of seventy, death parted him and his treasures. He never pretended to be a Christian.

This form of covetousness, this shoot from the root of all evil, although not as glaringly wicked as those found in gambling hells and at stock boards, is a lower and meaner vice than any of the others, and one more hopeless and incurable. This variety of the worshippers of Mammon can get into the Church. Many are there, and are fully persuaded that they have a right to be there. The faith upon which they build their hopes is merely their orthodoxy. It is such people of whom Jesus speaks (Luke xiii. 26), who shall say: "Lord, Lord, open unto us. . . . . We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets." But in the judgment the Lord will say to such, "I know you not." True, their accepted creed said, "The chief end of man is to glorify God"; but the whole tenor of their lives said, "The chief end of man is to get money, to accumulate property, to make a fortune." These things, as every sensible man knows, are all right in their places; but when they are suffered to become the chief end and aim in a man's life, then the Lord is dethroned and put into a subordinate place, to receive such attentions as

will not interfere too much with the service of Mammon, their supreme lord. Hence the poor deceived creatures will flatter themselves that those little attentions which they paid to their divine Lord and Judge, by eating and drinking in His presence, and listening to His teachings, will be quite satisfactory to Him. This awful glimpse which our Lord has given us into the scenes beyond death and the grave, and of the claims of Him who is the Judge of all either to the highest place in His people's hearts, or none, and of His stern denial of all who give Him a second place, ought to lead to deep searchings of heart.

THE ANTIDOTE.

WE have not been of those who have given notoriety to Col. Robert G. Ingersoll by publishing his blasphemies, or replying to his unsupported assertions, concerning the Bible. It was our strong conviction that in a very short time he himself would say what would do more to weaken and destroy his influence than could be said by any of his opponents, and in this we have not been mistaken.

The address at the funeral of his brother, a short time ago, has been more widely published and commented upon than anything which that brilliant and self-sufficient atheist has ever uttered. The most striking comment that has been made upon it was in one of the New York daily papers, by placing Ingersoll's address and a large portion of the fifteenth chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians in parallel columns, and then appending the brief and pregnant question: "Which do you prefer?" Nothing that man could say could be more apposite or impressive than this. The extremes of glory and gloom, of hope and despair, of life and death, are thus placed before the eye of the reader in startling contrast—the gloom, the despair, the blackness of darkness, clothed in as beautiful garb as human genius ever threw around them, and are only made the more sad and appalling by that beauty.

It is this awful absence of all to which human hearts would fain cling when "the world recedes and disappears," which gives to this eloquent wail—a wail which the soul of a God-forsaken man can not help but give out—that which makes this strange utterance of a far-famed blasphemer one of incalculable value. As the Lord put words into the mouth of the wicked Balaam, and constrained him to depict in strains of unsurpassed eloquence the glory of that people whose God is the Lord, so this gifted man seemed to have been constrained to portray, in colors as dark as Balaam's were bright, the fearful gloom of those who deny God's truth and blaspheme His name. Hear him: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry." What can be more appalling than this? If any words that man could utter would suffice to chill the hearts of the unthinking multitudes who have been applauding the disgusting blasphemies of this popular lecturer, and put them to silence, these, we should suppose, would suffice. If thought could be awakened at all in such minds, the first inquiry that would suggest itself would be: "Is that all your boasted philosophy can offer us in the place of that faith which you would have us despise and repudiate as a worn-out superstition? Can you give us nothing but an empty echo of our own wailing cry?" Ingersoll has been constrained by the pressure of a great sorrow to echo that cry in tones so unspeakably sad that they will reverberate through all the earth, and awaken thought

and apprehension in many a vain and giddy soul. It is well that the solemn circumstances in which the orator was placed pressed from his lips that strange address—so sincere, so sad, so hopeless, so unlike his other utterances, where, in the pride of what he calls science, in the vainglory of his intellectual gifts, and inflated with the laughter and applause of fools, he belched out his coarse ribaldry at that which all good men revere as sacred. He has in that brief utterance furnished the best antidote for his own poison that we can hope to find.

David uttered no wailing cry when he contemplated the valley of the shadow of death, but looked down into it with sweet composure and even with joy, as he said to his God: "I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." And then, stretching his vision of faith beyond the shadowy valley, he exultantly cries: "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Compare these utterances of sure and steadfast faith with Ingersoll's "cold and barren peaks of two eternities," if you would see the difference between faith and unbelief.

"Which do you prefer?"

SCRIPTURE REVISION.*

ENGLISH-SPEAKING Christians throughout the world are becoming more and more interested in the work of the association of learned men of both Great Britain and America now engaged in a revision of the received translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English tongue. It is a work of transcendent importance; for while it will make no change in the sense of the sacred oracles, we have every reason to hope that their study will be made clearer and easier to the common reader.

At the time when our present accepted translation was made, under the auspices of King James of England, and which was completed and published in 1611, there were other versions in existence and in the hands of the people, with which the conservatives of the seventeenth century were well satisfied. Some people at that day protested against the work, as some do now. Of these objectors the translators speak in their address to "the Reader" in terms as quaint as they are severe, a few words of which I quote:

"Many men's mouths have been opened a good while (and yet are not stopped) with speeches about the translation so long in hand, or rather perusal of translations made before; and ask what may be the reason, what the necessity of the em-

* Written before the Revised Version appeared.

ployment. Hath the Church been deceived, say they, all this while? Hath her sweet bread been mingled with leaven, her silver with dross, her wine with water, her milk with lime? . . . . We had hoped [the objectors are made to say] that we had been in the right way, that we had had the Oracles of God delivered unto us; and that though all the world had cause to be offended and to complain, yet that we had none."

The translations here spoken of, and with which many at that day (270 years ago) were well satisfied, were such as could hardly be understood by the people of the present day, just as Wickliffe's translation, made in the fourteenth century, would have been hardly intelligible to the English people of the seventeenth century. Many words used by Wickliffe had become obsolete, many new words had come in, while many others had changed their meaning. It is true that Wickliffe's translation was not in use in the beginning of the seventeenth century; but no translation then existing was satisfactory. William Tyndale published his translation of the New Testament in 1526, being the first that ever was printed in the English language. Soon after Tyndale's death, his translation of the Old Testament was finished and corrected by John Rogers, the martyr. It was printed at Hamburg. Another translation was made by a number of learned exiles from England under the reign of Mary, and printed in Geneva. This was much valued by the Puritans, but was not acceptable to the Bishops, who made a new one of their own, called the "Bishops' Bible."

This was the state of things when King James I., who liked neither the Genevan nor the Bishops translation, appointed fifty-four learned men to make a new translation from the original tongues. They met at Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster during their long session, which began in 1607 and ended in 1611, when their work was given to the public through the press. From that day to this that translation has been the standard version, acceptable to all denominations of Christians. Millions upon millions of copies have been published, and its words, in quotations, permeate all the religious literature of the English-speaking world. No book was ever so entrenched in human hearts as this; and it is no wonder that the present work of giving it a revising touch excites some degree of alarm and jealousy.

But during the long period of 270 years our language has undergone a good deal of change. Some words have, by universal usage, changed their meaning to the very opposite, for example the word prevent as found in 1 Thess. iv. 15—"We which are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall not *prevent* them which are asleep." Now the meaning of the word here is *go before*, which is the true etymological meaning; but as we use it, it means to hinder, to stop, to intercept. The same word is used in the Bible sense in Ps. cxix. 148, and in Ps. lix. 10 it is used in a somewhat different sense. The word *let* is another. In 2 Thess. ii. 7, it is used in this sense: "Only He who now letteth will let, until He be taken out of the way." Here the meaning is to retard, to hinder,

to impede, to interpose obstructions. This sense is now practically obsolete. As we use it, it means to permit, to suffer, to interpose no obstructions or hindrances, and in this sense it is often used in the Scriptures, as in Exodus—"Let my people go." "I will not let you go." This double and opposite meaning of that little word shows us that our language was still in a transition state at the time of which we are speaking. There are some other words in the Bible that have become obsolete everywhere else, and some the meanings of which do not convey quite the same idea to us that they did to the people of the seventeenth century. This is true of the word *conversation* which occurs so frequently in the epistles, especially those of Paul. At the time when the Bible was translated the meaning and acceptation of the word was, according to Webster, "General course of manners; behavior; deportment, especially as it respects morals"; but he remarks that the word in this sense is now nearly obsolete. To the reader of the seventeenth century the exhortation, "Let your conversation be without covetousness," would be correctly understood as applying to the life, the conduct, the character of the party addressed, and as opposed to greed and selfishness whether in heart or conduct. But in later years the word has come to have a much more restricted meaning, simply that of familiar discourse, chat, talk. Were we to bring that translation into harmony with present usages we would have to say, "Let your *talk* be without covetousness," which would strike every ear as rank nonsense. Twenty times does the word occur in

the Bible, and in every instance it has that old and obsolete definition quoted above. In not a single case is the word used as we use it, but solely in the old and discarded sense just mentioned. Had the word meant in 1611 what we make it mean, the question of the risen Lord to the two men on the road to Emmaus would have been translated, "What manner of conversation is this that ye have one with another as ye walk and are sad?" for the intercourse of two men walking together would be conversation in the strictest sense of the word as it is now understood and used (see Luke xxiv. 17).

The translators of the authorized version supplied too many words, which are printed in *italics*, and which often weaken the beauty and force of the text. Take, for example, the third verse of the Hundredth Psalm as it reads by dropping the supplied words, and also in connection with the marginal reading: "Know ye that the Lord He is God; He hath made us, and His we are, His people, and the sheep of His pasture." In our version it reads: "Know ye that the Lord He is God; it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture." I shall cite but a single example from the New Testament. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv., is speaking of the degrees of glory in the resurrection, and in the forty-first verse says: "Star differeth from star in glory"; but our translators, for the sake of precision, supplied two words—"*One* star differeth from *another* star in glory." Compare the two readings, and see how the supplied words detract from the grandeur

of the illustration. But as I do not pretend to be a Biblical critic, I shall pursue this point no further.

Let it be borne in mind that this is not so much a new translation as a revision of the old one, that it is made in the light of several ancient manuscripts which were unknown to the former translators, and also that it will bring the sacred text into harmony with our language in its present advanced and perfected state. Nothing more. Were the new version divided into chapters and verses, as the old is, it would require a pretty close Bible-student to distinguish the one from the other. Still thousands of the present generation will maintain that "the old is better," and will cling to it, while others will welcome the new, because it will be clearer, more in harmony with the original, and with our own language as it is now understood and used.

Another great benefit will result from this work. Thousands who now study the sacred oracles very little, and very superficially, will be led to read them carefully and to compare them one with the other, and thus become well read in the Scriptures. It will, it is true, be the old Book, and yet it will seem to be a new one. In this way, slowly but surely, the new will supplant the old.

The innumerable references and quotations made in thousands of religious books, and in elaborate concordances, will require, nay, demand editions of the revised Bible with the old divisions into chapters and verses, faulty as many of them are. The revised Scriptures will doubtless be published both

ways—in subjects and paragraphs, and also in chapters and verses.

Christians ought to be glad that this great work is going on and is nearly completed; for they will see, when they come to examine the revised Bible, that no historical part is altered, no doctrine shaken, no promise shorn of its consolation and glory.

UP AND DOWN.

HOPEFULNESS and despondency are often constitutional conditions, not dependent upon spiritual so much as upon physical causes—more upon a healthy or unhealthy condition of the spleen than upon anything else. We read of some eminent Christians who at times suffered greatly from despondency, even to utter hopelessness. The poet Cowper was a remarkable example of this. In his case it was hypochondriasis to the verge of insanity. Indeed for some time in his earlier life he was insane. But his beautifully devout spirit was not greatly affected; for he continued to love and worship his God even when he believed himself to be a castaway, and he never ceased to be gentle, kind, and amiable to those with whom he was associated. He was in this hopeless state when Mrs. Unwin, with whom he lived so long, in order to rouse him from his chronic melancholy, asked him to write her a humorous poem, telling in her own language the story of Gilpin's ride. A short time afterward he handed her "John Gilpin," a poem which for rich, quaint, and innocent humor and drollery has perhaps no equal in the English language. At another time, when the clouds were breaking away, he wrote that grandest of our sacred songs, beginning:

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

But in his case the darkness and storm passed away, and one of the last things he wrote was that sweet lyric now found in all our best collections:

"To Jesus, the crown of my hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone."

But the long, dark, sorrowful, and almost hopeless way through which it pleased God to lead Cowper, probably made him a better and more useful Christian than he could otherwise have been.

A disordered spleen, or a stomach which does not perform its functions properly, has the effect, where Christian grace is absent, to render the subject of it cross and ill-natured, in some cases gloomy and hopeless; in others, peevish, fretful, and splenetic. It is a disease of the physical organism which affects the mind in a remarkable degree. A poet writes:

"You humor me when I am sick:
Why not when I'm splenetic?"

And so we ought. We should always make allowance for friends thus afflicted. That is a sweet and consolatory assurance we have in the 103d Psalm, where it is said of the Lord, "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." Wherefore, let all who are in the dark comfort themselves with these words.

There are few better tests of Christian character than this, that the soul will still cling to God with

love and devotion even when unable to rejoice in hope. This Cowper and many others have done, and been borne through their Valleys of Humiliation, and have passed over to a better world in joy and triumph.

A distinguished minister and educator was strangely subject to ups and downs in his Christian experience. At one time he would be bright and full of joy, so much so that he would astonish his friends with his exuberant playfulness, while at other times his devotion was so fervent that he seemed more like an angel than a man. Few labored more earnestly for the salvation of others than he, and few accomplished more good. Yet he was subject to fits of despondency to such a degree that he lost all hope of his own salvation. Then he would be very miserable. Once, while under this sombre cloud, he had occasion to go to a distant city. While there he called upon a brother minister, a man zealous and faithful, but who was noted for his buoyancy of spirit and facetiousness. At once the beclouded and distressed old man began to tell his friend of his hopeless state—that for him there was no salvation. The other sat and listened without remark until the doleful complaint was ended. Then he began to laugh.

"Why, my dear brother," said the afflicted man, "what do you find in this to excite laughter?" "Well, doctor," said the other, "I was just thinking what a funny scene there will be when you and the devil meet."

He then fixed his eyes upon the door and began to personify his satanic majesty as he sat upon his

dark throne. Addressing some imaginary messengers, who had just come in from a raid, he asked in a stern voice: "Who have you got there?" The name was given. "Didn't he live in such a town?" naming it. "Yes." "Is not he the man who persuaded so many people to quit my service and become Christians?" "Yes." "And induced so many to give up drinking and become sober men?" "Yes." "And was so active in getting up prayer-meetings and revivals, and in fact spending his whole life in doing damage to my kingdom?" "Yes." "Take him away! take him away! we can't have him here! It would never do at all! Why, he would turn everything upside down!"

So admirable was the acting that the despairing man was constrained to join in the laugh. The utter groundlessness of his despondency was made so apparent that hope sprang up at once, and he left the house a happy man.

SORROW—JOY.

MOST people regard these two states, or emotions, as opposites; that when one is present the other must necessarily be absent. But this is an error so far as a true Christian is concerned. The joys and sorrows of the world, it is true, are not and can not be conjoined, for both work death. The mere worldling has a measure of joy, such as it is, in the success of his enterprises; so has the gambler when he wins his antagonist's money, and so has the devotee of pleasure while indulging in it. Yet such joy as this does not come within the purview of this discussion.

The prophet says of our Saviour that "He was a man of sorrows"; and He Himself asks by the mouth of another prophet, "Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow?" No sorrow was ever so deep and poignant as His. John, in his twelfth chapter, relates an incident which to my mind is exceedingly touching. The passage is brief and I shall quote it. I think Jesus had for a time stopped speaking, and was thinking of the fearful suffering which was just before Him. Then He exclaimed, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour." Then, rising higher, He exclaimed, "Father, glorify Thy name!" Instantly the Father answered in an audible voice, saying,

"I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Jesus then turned to His disciples and said, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes." He needed no audible voice; for the Father, without removing the cause of His anguish, poured into His soul such a flood of joy that the sorrow, terrible as it was, was swallowed up. He showed to Him the travail of His soul and He was satisfied. Then He spoke in the hearing of His disciples again, but in a very different tone: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Just for a moment as it were He had been overwhelmed with sorrow; but that sorrow had quickly been turned into joy—a measure of joy of which none but Himself was capable—a joy vast, immeasurable, infinite. In Gethsemane He fell for a little while under this awful cloud of horror again. But there again He overcame by meek submission to His Father's will; and when the band led by Judas found Him He was as calm and resolute as ever, and with sublime composure delivered Himself a prisoner into the hands of His murderers. Had He any joy mingled with that bitter cup? Unquestionably. He was sustained by the view of the joy that was set before Him and enabled to endure the cross and despise the shame. It was love that sustained Him all the way through His life of sorrow and His death of agony; and where love is, there must be joy. He was, it is true, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; but He was never wretched. "Lo, I come," is His joyful shout

as given by a prophet; "in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do Thy will, O my God." By another sacred writer He says He rejoiced in the habitable part of the earth, and His delights were with the sons of men (Proverbs viii. 31). Of Jesus it is true, as it is of the weakest and humblest of His people, that His afflictions—I shall not dare to call them light—worked for Him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He was "made perfect through suffering."

Sorrow, so far from being an evil, when it comes from God's hand, is, I believe, an essential element in the highest joy. Even the Eternal Father Himself uses the language of sorrow in speaking of the folly and waywardness of His people. Hear these pathetic words: "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" Dare we say that He did not feel the sorrow which this language expresses? Yet we never doubt but that His condition is one of infinite blessedness. And dare we imagine for a moment that He had no sorrow, no suffering, when He laid upon His beloved Son the iniquity of us all?

So it is, or so it ought to be, in the experience of believers on earth. For my own part I can testify that the highest and sweetest joy that I was ever favored with was in the midst of the darkest adversity, so far as worldly interests were concerned. Many years ago I heard for the first time the simple but triumphant lyric, beginning—

> "Oh! sing to me of Heaven,
> When I am called to die!"

The singer was a minister of one of the branches of the Methodist Church. He had a rich, full, and impressive voice. The refrain ran thus as he gave it:

"There'll be no more sorrow there,
There'll be no more sorrow there;
In Heaven above, where all is love,
There'll be no more sorrow there."

Is that true? Will there "be no more sorrow there"? were questions that arose to my mind. I did not like it; for my own experience had led me to regard sorrow as an essential element in the highest joy. Even penitential sorrow is one of the sweetest things in the experience of a true believer who knows that for him there is now no condemnation. A friend once called upon a good man who was drawing near to death, and found him weeping. He was asked if it was a sense of sin that was distressing him. "No," said he, "I do not weep because I have sinned, but because I know that my sins are forgiven." His were tears of joy; yet the element of sorrow was not absent. I am inclined to think that the redeemed sinner, when he gets to Heaven and sees those hands which still bear the scars of Calvary, will feel very much inclined to weep, and that the more he feels so the happier he will be.

To my mind it were an outrage upon the moral character of holy angels to suppose that their songs of joy were not suspended during those awful hours during which Jesus bore the wrath of God due to the sinners whose redemption He purchased with His agony and death. But what a compensation

they had when they saw the glorious consummation of that awful conflict, and saw how their and our glorious King was made perfect through suffering!

Sorrow and joy are mutual antagonists in one sense; yet in another and higher sense they are both essential to the highest degree of blessedness. Antagonism is essential to development in both nature and grace—in heaven as well as upon earth. But what is sorrow? We have seen that it may be conjoined with the strongest faith and the most ecstatic joy. It may also be combined with the lowest and most sinful passions, even with doubt, darkness, despair, and wretchedness—with loss of friends, loss of property, loss of character. But all these, and many more forms of sorrow, are nothing more than what the apostle calls the sorrow of the world. But when combined with faith and full persuasion of the love of God, and accepted as one expression of that love, the whole nature of sorrow is changed. That which was dark becomes bright; that which was crushing us down is made to lift us up as nothing else can. A poet expresses this thought beautifully in these lines:

> "Sorrow, touched by Thee, grows bright
> With more than rapture's ray;
> As darkness shows us worlds of light
> We never saw by day."

ORIGIN OF LYTE'S HYMN, "ABIDE WITH ME."

BOUT forty years ago, Wilson, in his "Noctes Ambrosianæ," says: "Have you seen a little volume, entitled 'Tales in Verse,' by Rev. H. F. Lyte, which seems to have reached a second edition? Now that is the right kind of religious poetry." And the Christian world has unanimously agreed that Wilson was right. No finer religious poetry has ever been given to the world, or poetry that was more uplifting in its every line, than that of the obscure country rector—obscure while living, but famous since his death. He was born of gentle blood, at Kelso, in June, 1793, but, owing to narrow means, was compelled to struggle hard for his education. He graduated from his studies with honor, however, but settled down into a "dreary Irish curacy," where he toiled until compelled by ill health to resign. He finally settled in Brixham, where he toiled for twenty years, under many a cloud of pastoral difficulty and discouragement. While here he wrote the beautiful hymn which is known by all Christians, of whatever denomination. It contains eight verses, of which we quote two below. The first line will recall the whole:

"Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide."

This hymn was the last poetic utterance of Lyte, written as the shadows of the dark valley were

closing his labors on earth. Though he was, as he says, scarcely "able to crawl," he made one more attempt to preach and to administer the Holy Communion. "O brethren!" said he, "I can speak feelingly, experimentally, on this point; and I stand before you seasonably to-day, as alive from the dead, if I may hope to impress it upon you, and induce you to prepare for that solemn hour which must come to all, by a timely acquaintance with, appreciation of, and a dependence on the death of Christ." Many tearful eyes witnessed the distribution of the sacred elements, as given out by one who was already standing with one foot in the grave. Having given, with his dying breath, a last adieu to his surrounding flock, he retired to his chamber, fully aware of his near approach to the end of time. As the evening of the sad day gathered its darkness, he handed to a near and dear relative this immortal hymn, with music accompanying, which he had prepared:

"Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide:
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

"Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay on all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!"

The Master did abide with him the few more days he spent on earth. His end is described as that of "the happy Christian poet, singing while strength lasted"; and while entering the dark valley, pointing upward with smiling countenance he whispered: "Peace, joy."

THE BLESSINGS OF POVERTY.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity."—*Shakespeare.*

LET no one imagine that there is any benefit, or blessing, or merit in poverty itself, apart from divine grace. It is a trial, an affliction, a test of character. Like all other afflictions it is only a blessing to those who are properly exercised thereby. If it is borne with cheerful, thankful, unmurmuring resignation, and if it begets a trust in the promises of God to the poor, then it enstamps the likeness of Jesus upon the soul, and fills it with joy and peace. But if the lack of the good things of this life causes impatience, or murmuring, or distrust, or envy, or selfishness, or covetousness, then its effect is to mar at least, if not totally obliterate, the image of Christ. Yet this condition, which is so common, is probably the best that the Lord can lay upon us. The opposite condition of wealth is more perilous. Jesus Himself tells us so. To some He gives more, to others less—to all as much as is good for them. To the poorest His promise is, that they that trust in Him shall not want any good thing. Hence it is that the absence of wealth brings us nearer to God, and brings into perpetual exercise this every-day faith, this trusting spirit, this ever-present feeling of dependence, and enstamps the likeness of Jesus upon the spirit, as few other exercises can, thus making the

poor, as James expresses it, rich in faith. Abject poverty, absolute destitution, is impossible to such as exercise this steady trust in the word of Him who said: "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." The more we trust in the Lord for what is needful for us just now, the more we shall grow into the likeness of our Lord, and the greater shall we become in the kingdom of heaven.

THOUGHTS FOR THE AGED.

FEEL inclined to have a little familiar talk with my aged friends who are able to give a good reason for the hope that is in them—people who, like myself, are near the end of their earthly pilgrimage. I shall not say near to death, or near the end of life, for that is not a correct way of expressing it; for Jesus most emphatically declares that "he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "I give unto them eternal life," He says again. He does not say that He will give it, but that He has already given it. They can not perish; for them there is no condemnation. So far as they are concerned death is swallowed up in victory. The laying down of this earthly tabernacle in the grave for a little while is only a part of that grand process which infinite wisdom and goodness chose to bring His dearly bought children to the ineffable honor of being made His sons and daughters, and the brethren of their divine Redeemer.

The inspired Scriptures speak of "the spirits of just men made perfect"—men whose bodies are still mouldering in the dust—and Paul speaks in easy and familiar terms of being "absent from the body and present with the Lord." The dying Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and then immediately, as the sacred historian expresses it, "fell asleep" after uttering with his expiring breath

a prayer for his murderers. No believer has a shadow of a doubt that the Lord Jesus did receive Stephen's spirit, and that he is now present with the Lord, in the enjoyment of a life vastly higher and "far better" than the life he had in the flesh, good and happy as that was. Still, united to Christ, his body will "rest in the grave until the resurrection," as our Catechism beautifully expresses it, and then he will rise yet another step, and come into a state of full salvation.

We can not, without a violation of all that is beautiful and true, joyful and triumphant, invest such a departure as that—tragic as it was to the eye of sense—with the habiliments of woe and call it death. Stephen did not die. It pleased his Lord to give him a crown of martyrdom, and an illustrious record on earth as one of His witnesses, and also a crown of righteousness in heaven.

Yet Stephen had only the same faith that is open and free to every one of us, and the same mercy which carried him through will take us through and enable us to say as he did, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" He was a redeemed sinner like us, and had the same infirmities. Why, then, can not all Christians view their own departure from this short, sinful, suffering life in the light which shines so beautifully in that of the good deacon of whom we have been speaking? Our Saviour did all He could to scatter the gloom which, in the mere light of nature, hangs around our departure from this life; and in the narrative He has given us of the martyrdom of Stephen He sets before us an example of one Christian departing to his everlasting

home in all the triumph of continued and augmented life.

Now, dear old friends, let us bring the matter home to ourselves, for the time of our departure is at hand. Why can not we be glad of it? Why can not we desire, as Paul did, to depart and be with Christ? Some can and do desire it, and look forward to "that day" as the most desirable of any that lies before them; while at the same time they patiently wait for it as Job did. Why is it so?

We know that there is implanted in our nature for a wise purpose an instinctive dread of death, and that the desire to prolong our mortal life is in its place a good desire. That is one reason why we invest death with gloom and prefer not even to think about it. Another is doubt as to what may follow. This is a condition in which no believer should remain contentedly for a single day. The apostle enjoins it upon Christians to make their calling and election sure; and he tells us how this is done—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Nothing short of this can overcome the fear of death, and nothing short of this can enable us to live Christian lives. Resting on Christ alone for salvation is the only real foundation of Christian life.

Paul speaks of some in his day who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. A true Christian may be in that state; but it is one that is as dishonoring to Christ as it is injurious to himself.

"Oh! could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love
With unbeclouded eyes;
Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream nor Death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore."

In a recent article I said that in very early life it was strongly impressed upon my mind that I was in some way to be highly favored. I think it was a true impression, and in no way has it been more signally realized than in an entire freedom from the fear of death. There was nothing I more enjoyed, and nothing that I oftener indulged in, than the thought of departing from this life to a better. This has with me been an abiding state for nearly seventy years. While still in early boyhood I have laid my head on my pillow and thought how delightful it would be if I could sleep the sleep that knows no waking in this world. It was not a morbid state of mind; for no boy was more cheerful than I, or enjoyed life better. It was the pure and sinless life of a better world that I longed for. I was not weary of this world; but in the reckless buoyancy of youth I felt that my life was not what it ought to be. In heaven it would be. When about entering manhood my health gave way for several months, so that I supposed that the time of my departure was at hand. Never during a long and by no means unhappy life have I experienced such thrilling joy as while I was under that impression. That was sixty years ago; and ever since,

when I wish to form a conception of the joys of heaven, memory goes back to that experience. But restored health gave me an intimation that I was turned back. I felt some measure of disappointment; but that was wrong, for now I know that my joy had too much of the element of selfishness in it; although my hope was well grounded. Now I thank God that He has permitted me to live as long as I have lived. It is well. Still the memory of that short and happy period has been a treasure to me all my life, and is yet.

Pardon me for telling so much of my own personal experience. But it is what any one who clings to Christ alone for salvation can easily attain to. When the Christian can do that, he knows that he is in Christ Jesus, and that for him there is no condemnation (Rom. viii. 1). It is of the nature of unbelief for him to allow his sins to obscure that glorious hope which he is permitted to entertain.

I have now lived a little over fourscore years, and enjoy life as well as ever. Often I think of the multitude of dear friends whom I knew and loved who have gone over before me, and feel how glad we shall be to meet each other again. That friends will recognize each other over there I have not a shadow of doubt. This of itself ought to make the approach of the day of their departure an object of desire to people who have lived as long as we have. If Jesus knows us, we shall be no strangers there. Let our departure, therefore, which to many of us is now so near, become a familiar thought, and then it will soon be a pleasant one—not dark and gloomy, but full of hope and joy.

FOURSCORE.

"THE days of our years," says the Psalmist, "are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow." This is the common lot of humanity, we all know; but it has pleased God to exempt me from the pains, the infirmities, and the failing faculties incident to old age. Indeed, it is only because I know the number of my years that I know that I am an old man. True, I have not as much bodily strength as I have had; but I never had very much. In buoyancy of spirit I have lost nothing; in mental force I am not conscious of having lost anything; in the mere enjoyment of physical life I know that I have lost nothing. "Well, then," my reader will say, "you have been highly favored." So I have been. I well remember that before I was ten years old the thought was strongly impressed upon my mind that I was destined to be highly favored, and I have carried that impression through all the vicissitudes of a changing and rather stormy life. At the age of twenty I thought this peculiar favor would come in an early death. But it came not in that way; and now here I am at four times twenty, perfectly content to wait, as Job expressed it, "till my change come" (xiv. 14).

Many times I have changed my plan. I have

seen life in all its phases. I have mingled with all kinds of people, and engaged in a variety of labors and avocations. I have been favored with a memory of unusual tenacity, and so am able to look back through a vista of more than seventy years, and recall very many of the incidents of childhood, youth, and middle age as clearly as if they were both of yesterday.

I have heard old people talk of the shortness of life when viewed retrospectively. That is not my experience. Did I not know the number of my years, I should imagine that I had lived through centuries. What amazing advances the world has made in every way since I began to observe it! It would fill columns to enumerate things that have been brought forth in science, inventions, and improvements in the physical, intellectual, and moral world during my day. Had a man been born under the reign of Alfred the Great, and moved among men during the thousand years which intervened between that date and the first decade of this century, he would not have seen as much advancement as I have seen. To live through such a period is in itself a great favor, and so have been my opportunities and powers of observation. Taken all together, my life has been a favored one.

Fourscore is one of the most impressive epochs in human life. So far as the activities and interests of the world are concerned it is, or ought to be, the "last of earth." Not much more is to be done or hoped for here. The review of the past and the hopes which lie beyond, when mortality shall be "swallowed up of life," are enough to occupy the

mind, and I thank God that to me both are pleasant. The blood of Jesus has washed away my sins which have been many, so that I know that for me "there is no condemnation." The power does not exist which is able to pluck me out of my Father's and my Redeemer's hand. I am able, with entire confidence, to use the Twenty-third Psalm, all but the last clause, in the past tense. That last clause can never be in the past tense.

Although what the world calls plenty has not been my lot through life, I suppose few men have enjoyed more happiness, and that often in the midst of the darkest adversity. Thus have I proved that prosperity is not essential to enjoyment. While yet a boy the thought was strongly impressed upon my mind that I could not bear the possession of wealth. I prayed that I should never possess it. It is true that I tried, and tried hard, to better my worldly condition, but without decided success, in the common acceptation of that word. It pleased God to thwart me at times, and He often

> "Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
> Blasted my gourds and laid me low."

But the promise that "he that trusteth in the Lord shall not want any good thing" never failed me, and that kept my mind in peace. That trust is better than wealth; for, in addition to its absolute and literal truth, it leaves nothing between a man and his God. It is well, to be sure, that some men should acquire wealth. It would not be good for the world that my experience should be the experience of all. But I am fully persuaded that

many men are toiling and moiling, and perhaps doing many things that they ought not to do, to acquire wealth which they would be better and safer without.

There is a verse as wicked as it is vigorous which I came across long ago, and which fixed itself in my memory. This is it:

> "'Tis a very good world that we live in,
> To buy, or to sell, or to give in;
> But to beg, or to borrow, or get a man's own,
> 'Tis the very worst world that ever was known."

In my own experience I have found the very opposite of this to be true, for ever since early life I have found almost unvarying kindness at the hands of my fellow-men. I have met with no wrongs worth speaking of, but so many favors, so many acts of loving-kindness, that now when about to step off the field of action, my heart is filled with grateful emotions. I can adopt the first line of the verse just quoted without any qualifications, for indeed it is a very good world, and I am not at all tired of it. Only let a man try to make the world better for his having lived in it, and there is no danger of his bringing railing accusations against it. Infinite Wisdom made this world of ours the best possible place for such a race of sinners as we are. It is beautiful, it is full of blessings, and with the Holy Spirit in his heart a man may be very happy in it, while fitting himself under discipline for one still better.

Such reflections as these might be extended indefinitely. But let this suffice. This article is nec-

essarily egotistical; for that, however, I offer no apology, because I think that long and varied experience has given me some light, and we are forbidden to hide what light we may have. Length of days ought to afford some wisdom, and that wisdom may be of use to those who are not so far advanced in the pilgrimage of life. Renewed health may enable me to hold some further converse with your readers.

PROPHECY IN HISTORY.

MANY of the events recorded in the Old Testament are prophetic as well as historic. When the seven years' famine came upon Egypt, according to the prediction of Pharaoh's double dream, as interpreted by Joseph, the people of Egypt, in their sorely-felt destitution, ran to the king for relief, just as all men, when brought to a sense of their own helplessness, call upon that Supreme Being whom, with more or less intelligence, they recognize as God. Pharaoh was not deaf to the cry of his famished people, but said unto them, "Go to Joseph; what he saith to you do." In this we find a beautiful prophecy and type of the Father's introduction of the Saviour to perishing sinners, where He directs them to go to Christ, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." Pharaoh, under God, had raised up Joseph to be a prince and a saviour to a famished people, and well and wisely he did the work which his God and his King had given him to do. God the Father raised up His Son Jesus to be a Prince and a Saviour in a vastly greater salvation; and then in language almost the same as the king of Egypt had used, He says to us all, "Go to Jesus—hear ye Him—what He saith to you do." No relief can be obtained in any other way; for there is none other name whereby we must or can be saved.

The final victory of the Church over her enemies, when the era of righteousness and peace shall succeed the centuries of her struggle with error and opposition, is graphically set forth in the historical account which we have of the taking of Jericho (Joshua vi.). Jericho was a strongly walled city. No engines of physical force were to be or could be brought against it. Indeed the children of Israel had no implements of war that would have been of any avail against such a stronghold. But the Lord needed nothing of the kind; therefore He chose a method which would tax the faith of His people to the utmost. Day after day, for six days, the host of Israel, followed by the priests bearing the ark of the Lord, were required to march round the city outside of the walls once, the priests meanwhile sounding trumpets of rams' horns. That was done one day, and then they returned to their camp. The second day the same thing was done, and so on for the third day, the fourth, the fifth, and the sixth; but still no visible impression was made. Had not God commanded it, a more foolish and ridiculous operation no army ever engaged in. Doubtless the men of Jericho made themselves merry as they gazed from the top of their walls at the idle pageant; and the weak in faith among the Israelites would be ashamed, and strongly tempted to tax even their God with folly. But on the seventh day they were commanded to compass the walls seven times. At the seventh time the trumpets were to give a long and strong blast, and the people to utter a great shout. All this was done as commanded. The people did their

part faithfully, and then God did His part. The walls fell flat as the Lord had promised that they should, and the city was taken and destroyed without making the slightest resistance, so far as we are informed.

Now why was this protracted marching and trumpet blowing? It was, as intended, a severe test of faith and obedience on the part of the chosen people; and although they had often murmured and rebelled during the early part of their history, they did not fail to do their part on this occasion, notwithstanding the apparent uselessness and even absurdity of what they were called upon to do. That is a grand mention of this transaction which we find in the 11th chapter of Hebrews: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days." Their faith had its reward, although, beyond their simple obedience, what they did had no effect upon those walls. The power was all divine, and was unseen by mortal eye.

So in obedience to their divine Master the heralds of the Gospel have been sounding their trumpets century after century around the world. The walls of the evil one seem to be as firm as ever; but the day is approaching when they will fall down as flat as did those of Jericho. The command given to Joshua to march round and round those walls was very much like that given by the Lord to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." But as soon as the Church of Christ shall have accomplished that work, "then will the end come"; Satan's kingdom will fall as did Jericho:

and God's spiritual Israel will take possession of the earth (see Dan. vii. 27). The victory will be gained, as it was at Jericho, not by the might nor the power of men; not by wisdom, not by well-laid plans, not by powerful congregations; but by the still small voice of the Holy Spirit, which God has promised to pour out upon all flesh—an influence as invisible, as silent, as irresistible as was the force which prostrated the walls of Jericho, or that which at the appointed season clothes the earth with verdure.

All Bible readers are familiar with the history of Gideon's victory over the combined hosts of Midian and Amalek. At first Gideon had an army of thirty-two thousand men; yet the enemies of Israel greatly outnumbered them. But the Lord said unto Gideon, "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Gideon then gave permission to all who were afraid to go into such an apparently unequal fight to return to their homes. Twenty-two thousand returned, leaving only ten thousand. These, by remaining, may be ranked as volunteers—brave men who had faith in God and confidence in their leader. But the Lord said, "The people are yet too many," and by a singular test (see Judges vii. 5, 6) He reduced the number to three hundred. Each of these was armed with a trumpet in one hand and an earthen vessel, here called a pitcher, with a lighted lamp in it, in the other. In the night, concealed by the darkness, this little unarmed body,

divided into three bands, scattered themselves around the camp of the enemy, who were as grasshoppers for multitude. At a signal from their leader every man broke his pitcher, which caused the light of his lamp to flash out suddenly in the sight of the panic-stricken host. At the same time a trumpet blast, equally sudden, rang in their ears, mingled with the cry, "The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon!" This strange assault, which, in the absence of faith would have been audacity of the maddest kind, was enough for the Lord, who chooses the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. Every heart in that numerous host quailed with terror, and every warrior became so confused that he saw a foeman in every comrade. In this way "the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow even throughout all the host." Thus were the enemies of Israel dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Gideon, in this historical incident, well represents the Church of Jesus Christ in its conflict with the multitudinous forces of earth and hell. That was a very little band which Jesus, at the beginning, sent out against the camp of the prince of darkness which occupied the whole world; and at no time have the Lord's lamp-bearers been any more than a little band. But the cheering words of their almighty Leader have never lost their potency—"Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Like Gideon's band they have been going on and on for century after century; but just now they are moving forward with a rapidity never before known. Every

side of the mighty camp is begirt with these almost unnoticed lamp-bearers. In other words, the missionaries of the cross sent out by the churches have now reached nearly all nations. The time for the breaking of the earthen vessels and for the outburst of light upon the earth, can not be far distant. I think we are warranted in believing that the destruction of Satan's kingdom, by being divided against itself, as was the Midianitish army, may, judging from the signs of the times, soon be expected. But as to what is symbolized by the breaking of the pitchers, I venture not to hazard an opinion.

In this article three different historical incidents are mentioned, and they only by way of examples of this writing of prophecy by types and symbols found in the history of events long past. The Scriptures of the Old Testament are full of them. But, nevertheless, let us be careful not to overstrain the teachings of the inspired volume on this line.

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS IN SEVENTY YEARS.

BOUT twenty-eight hundred years ago Solomon wrote, "Say not thou the former days were better than these"; and had he lived in our day he might have said the same thing with equal or stronger emphasis. Dr. Young says, "'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours." The writers of the Psalms often speak of the past history of the chosen people, and of the Lord's dealings with them; and Jesus Himself, in the fulness and freshness of His teachings, often refers to the men and the times of old.

Having reached an age when memory sweeps over a period of seventy years, the writer feels that he may be permitted to speak of the changes and the progress which he has witnessed in his day, together with the impressions which the world made upon his mind as he passed through life from boyhood to old age. Perhaps he is peculiar in one respect—what he has forgotten is clean gone forever; but what he does remember is as fresh as if it were of yesterday.

A little over seventy years ago a work fell into my hands—two large volumes, with numerous maps—which treated not only of the geography of the globe, so far as it was then known, but of the character, manners, and customs of all the nations and

tribes of mankind on the earth. It, however, dwelt most fully upon those least known at that day. Memory has retained the teachings of that work with singular tenacity, so that even to this day those maps and the facts given in the text come up as a groundwork of all I know on such subjects. Then, having been a careful observer of subsequent changes, I am able to have a clearer and more vivid impression of the advances which the world has made during that long period than I could have had but for that early study—not at school, but at home; not imposed as a task, but voluntary, because I found it to be intensely interesting.

China and Japan, shut up as they then were by jealous rulers, against the outside world, with their strange customs, with cities more populous at that day than any other on the globe, and with their temples, pagodas, canals, great wall, etc., were thoroughly studied and never forgotten. New Holland, as Australia was then called, with its immense extent; its strange flora and fauna; its aboriginal inhabitants, then supposed to be the lowest of the human race; together with its vast but unexplored interior, made a strong impression. The only use which was made of that greatest of islands at that day was that of a British penal colony at Botany Bay, on its southwest coast. These, taken all together, gave it a peculiar interest not unmixed with horror. Borneo, another great tropical island, was studied with similar feelings. All India was then wrapped in profound darkness so far as religion was concerned. All the islands of the Pacific were at that day peopled with savage cannibals of the lowest

type, the fiercest and most hopelessly savage being those of New Zealand. Darkness at that day covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. There was not a word in that work on the subject of Christian missions.

This was a dark world during the first twenty years of this century. Napoleon was raging through Europe like a roaring lion. Even our own country, poor and unprepared as it was, rushed into war. The various conflicting sects of Christendom turned many of their pulpits into ecclesiastical batteries against each other. Slavery grew strong without protest, rebuke, or check. Not a voice was raised against intemperance. Poor debtors were at the mercy of their creditors, and were often cast into prison in default of payment. There were very few Sabbath-schools in those days, and meetings for social prayer were few and far between.

Well do I remember—and it was the beginning of a new line of thought—when the *Weekly Recorder*, published by Rev. John Andrews, of Chillicothe, Ohio—of which the *Banner* is a continuation—came into our family, and in it I read of the departure of the first missionaries to the Sandwich Islands. I had recently studied carefully the character of those horrid savages, the murderers of Captain Cook, the famous navigator, and I thought that if they could be civilized and Christianized, there was hope for all. Very few, however, had any faith in the success of the enterprise. Most people regarded it as madness. But now we know the result.

Not very long after the missionaries had estab-

lished themselves there, an American naval vessel touched at the islands and found that the missionaries had acquired sufficient influence over the natives to put a stop to a commerce unfit to be named, and which was common and unrestrained during their savage condition. A complaint against the missionaries was drawn up, signed by the officers, and forwarded to the Secretary of the Navy. The complaint was that the missionaries had put a stop to the *friendly* intercourse between the natives and American naval vessels. This missive was widely published, gave some trouble, and caused no little discussion and controversy. Some years afterward I became acquainted with one of the officers who had signed that paper. But in the meantime he was converted and had become an earnest Christian, but still held the same position in the naval service. Although he knew that his sin was pardoned, the remembrance of it bowed his head like a bulrush for the rest of his days. With David he was constrained to say, "My sin is ever before me."

I have lived to see those hoary prison-houses, China and Japan, opened, and the light of the Gospel pouring in, so that the churches at home are filled with hope and joy. India is accepting Christ and casting away its idols. Ethiopia is stretching forth its hands unto God. Madagascar is sitting at the feet of Jesus. Indeed every door on earth is now open. New Zealand and Australia have become important nationalities, almost independent, and the natives are not exterminated as those in Cuba were, but raised up to Christian life. Nearly all the islands of the Pacific are now Christian. Lit-

tle as I have done to help on these things, I have watched them through what would make a full term of human life, and feel like using the glad words of good old Simeon: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, ... for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people."

Not yet have the heathen—the nations—been given to the Son for His inheritance; but during one lifetime marvellous progress has been made in the work of putting Him in possession. "Ask of me," says the Lord in the Second Psalm, "and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." We have in this century seen this great promise being rapidly fulfilled. And what then? "Thou shalt break them," says God, "with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The Son Himself tells us that in the work of taking possession tremendous commotions will rend the earth; the nations will be in perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring—strong figurative expressions of popular uprisings and lawlessness. Millions of hearts now beating in human breasts may be filled with fear "and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Then only those things which can not be shaken will remain (Heb. xii. 27). Most plainly does the sure word of prophecy warn us that the Lord will not take possession of the world which He has redeemed, and establish the peaceable reign of righteouness, until He shall have swept away the accumulated rubbish of ages. Now

let us see how the Lord Jesus would have His believing people meet the signs of the coming of that great and terrible day when He will wield that rod of iron and dash the nations in pieces like a potter's vessel. How sublimely calm are His assuring words: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

When the tempest came down upon the disciples on the Sea of Galilee, and their Master was asleep, they were terribly alarmed, as thousands of disciples will be when they see "these things begin to come to pass"—and many now living may see them;—but such fears are wrong, as was the terror of the disciples in that storm. Jesus rebuked them for their lack of faith; and with like displeasure will He regard the terror of His people at the roaring of the sea and the waves which He assures them are coming. But believers have nothing to fear, for their Heavenly Father speaks to them through His prophet in accents as calm, as kind, as loving, and as assuring as are the words of Jesus just quoted, saying: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah xxvi. 20).

THE WORLD'S PROGRESS.

IN the August Number of the *Foreign Missionary* I met with this brief paragraph, printed merely as an item of news, without note or comment:

"The New Testament in the Corean language is about to be printed from type furnished by Japanese type-founders."

Here are two populous countries which had been for centuries shut up like great prison-houses, enshrouded in thick heathenish darkness, bound in fetters, their people shut in from the world and the world shut out from them. For more than half a century the writer of this article has regarded those stupendous prisons with about as much faith as the Samaritan lord expressed when told that on the morrow the starving city would be abundantly supplied, and to which he answered, "Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven might this thing be." (See 2 Kings vi., vii.) That Samaritan thought that nothing short of a miracle, like the raining of manna from heaven, could relieve the city; and so many of us could not see how those ponderous bolts and bars could be broken. We prayed that it might be done; but who among us believed that we should live to see the boon granted?

But it has been done, and we hardly know how,

No miracle that man can see has been wrought; no convulsion has shaken the earth; natural law and the ordinary providence of God have been going on as usual; and yet those bars which for many generations confined the millions of China, Corea, and Japan have apparently melted away like a morning cloud. Truly in this case the kingdom of heaven has not come with observation. We know as little, and the people of those great nations know as little as to how it was done as Peter knew how the bolts and bars of Herod's prison were made to give way. But Peter saw that it was done, and we see that this great work has been done. Like Peter, we are glad; yet nothing has happened that has either alarmed or astonished the world at large. The most wonderful thing about it is, that the fact can be stated in a few words, as if it were a common thing, that Japanese type-founders are furnishing type to print the New Testament in Corea.

Thus silently and invisibly, as the dew falls, is the Spirit of God coming down upon our race, and the light of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness is touching some of the darkest places on the globe. In this way will the glory of the latter day be ushered in.

Although the faithful labors of the missionaries of the cross are required, just as the little band, with their pitchers, lamps, and trumpets were required when Gideon scattered the Midianitish hosts, still it will be in the latter day as it was then. The three hundred with their fragile pitchers and glimmering lamps would only have pro-

voked the derision and laughter of the great army of Midian had that army not at the same time been smitten with the terrors of God, and by His unseen power set to the strange work of mutual destruction. In the same way the world, whether infidel or idolatrous, looks with contempt upon the little bands of missionaries who have gone out into the darkness with their pitchers and lamps. But, with the most thoughtful portion of unbelievers, derision is beginning to change into astonishment as they see such results as they now behold among the great nations of Eastern Asia. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." Paul may plant and Apollos may water—and Paul and Apollos may be ever so weak and contemptible in the eyes of the world—but God can give the increase in any measure He pleases.

I am inclined to believe that when the latter-day glory shall come—that period we speak of as the Millennium—it will come without observation—that it will come upon a wretched and shattered world and a deeply humiliated Church—that it will find God's people as the liberated Peter found the disciples at the house of Mary, mourning and praying for his deliverance; but with faith so weak that they told Rhoda that she was mad when she announced to them the fact that Peter himself was standing at the gate.

THE AGES TO COME.

EVERY thoughtful Christian who has a good hope of everlasting life often dwells in meditation upon that endless existence upon which he will soon enter—what will be its employments, its activities, its joys, and its services; and it is right that he should do so. The life of our Redeemer on earth was very active, and in His condition as a mortal man, His work in going about doing good was very laborious. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work," said He, and in that work He found His highest joy. Before He became a man He is reported by one of the old prophets as declaring: "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do Thy will, O my God!" But He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister—and to give His life a ransom for many. In this labor and sacrifice, in this sorrow and suffering, He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied, and thus secured not only eternal life and blessedness for His people, but a name that is above every name for Himself, and a measure of bliss which God alone is able to comprehend.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," says Christ; and if the great Supreme and the Incarnate Son both find their blessedness in ceaseless activity, guided by infinite benevolence, surely the saints in

glory are not destined to a life of idleness and self-gratification. Like their glorious Master they will be active in doing good—not laboriously so, as He was in this world; but in that active benevolence their highest joy and their greatest strength and advancement will be found.

There is a vast amount of work to be done in the ages to come in this boundless empire of Jehovah. The thought often rises in my mind that in this world of ours the first union of immortal life with corporeal existence, with flesh and blood, took place, and that we stand as it were at the threshold of the creation of God. In Revelation iii. 14 our Saviour applies a term to Himself which is nowhere else found—a term so profoundly mysterious that I never dared even in thought to comprehend it—"*the beginning of the creation of God.*" It seems to be a glimpse of the wonders of His nature, and carries us back to that period which He mentions in His fullest recorded prayer, in which He speaks to His Father of "the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." It also seems to agree with that sublime passage in the 8th of Proverbs, where Wisdom personified says: "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths I was brought forth." (See Prov. viii. 22 to the end.) These last remarkable utterances can be used by none other than Christ, as we know the first two are. In all these the idea of progressive duration is clearly expressed, which can not be said of God in His essential nature. But all of them reach far beyond Adam in the past. That much we know, but that is all.

Well did the prophet exclaim, when speaking of the promised Messiah: "His name shall be called Wonderful" (Is. ix. 6).

The notion has crept into many minds that there are two distinct kinds of duration, time and eternity. That before this world began was eternity—sometimes rather absurdly called a *past* eternity. That time, as distinguished from eternity, measures the duration of this world, or, if taken as it applies to us as individuals, to this life, and that at death we shall enter eternity. This is all wrong. Time is simply progressive duration, however far backward or far forward it may reach, and embraces all beings except the Infinite One. Strictly speaking He is the only eternal being that exists or can exist. To all other beings duration is necessarily progressive, and the length of their existence will ever be finite. Of the second person in the Trinity, we can never fathom the deep mysteries of His nature, nor of the ineffable relation which He bears to the Father—the same, yet distinct. On such a theme it were impious in us to speculate. That He is truly divine the Scriptures abundantly testify; therefore He must be eternal; yet, in some sense, above the reach of our comprehension He Himself speaks of a beginning.

So much for the ages past. Now let us see if we can find anything touching the ages to come—that unending duration which lies away beyond what we now see and know. Paul, in the first and second chapters of his Epistle to the Ephesians seems to be exalted to the third heaven in the grandeur of his views of Christ, and of "the hope of his calling,

and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Mark the words: "the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints!" (i. 18). Now read on, observing the force of every word, to the 7th verse of the second chapter, where he seems to reach the culmination of his grand theme, bursting away beyond what men call time to "the ages to come"—the successive cycles of that unending life which Christ gives to His saints, His Church, "which is His body, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all."

Does not the thought of the apostle, or rather of the Holy Spirit who spoke through the apostle, rise higher and reach farther than to the coming centuries of the Church in this world, when he writes—"God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that *in the ages to come* He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus"?

This is a vast universe in the midst of which we find ourselves. It is God's work, His empire, and we know that His tender mercies are over all His works. And we know, for God Himself has told us, that He who made these countless worlds, became a man in this world, and gave His life a ransom for sinners. And we know that this divine man, after He rose from the dead, solemnly declared that to Him all power was given—not all power on earth only, but all power in heaven also.

This power is not confined to that celestial centre where in imagination we locate the throne of the Most High, and where Jesus in His humanity is supposed to dwell, but extends to and blesses all worlds with whatever benefits they are in need of. If in any of them there are beings capable of know ing and worshipping God, there will the Holy Spirit direct and inspire that worship; to them will ministering spirits be sent; and the Holy Scriptures assure us "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times"—times, not time—"He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth." What a vast work is here spoken of!

What, from this stand-point, is the grandeur of Paul's idea when he speaks of the ages to come! What the immeasurable benefits of the labors and sufferings of Him who tells us that He is "the Beginning of the Creation of God," and by whom all worlds were made! What a vast expansion does this view give us of the mediatorial kingdom of our Redeemer to whom all things shall be gathered together! and to what unimaginable dignity does it advance those who are not only saved, but made kings and priests in that boundless empire, and whose high mission it shall be to dispense benefits and blessings to beings who may be called into existence millions of years hence! There is no danger of exaggeration here, so long as we keep the sure word of revelation in sight. This thought pressed upon the enraptured soul of John when he exclaimed: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should

be called the sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is!"

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

WHEN Paul stood on Mars Hill and talked to the Athenians about their altars and their idols, he, with masterly skill, seized upon an inscription which he had seen upon one of their altars, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD," to introduce to them the true God and the Christ—to tell them of that man who was appointed to judge the world in righteousness, the assurance of which is found in the fact that God raised Him from the dead. Of God he said, "In Him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring." So far, therefore, the apostle and his Grecian auditors stood on common ground, and from this common ground he began to preach Christ and the resurrection. But the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead was so immeasurably beyond their philosophy, that the discourse was interrupted by some of them mocking, while others wished to have the discussion put off to another time.

Paul, on that occasion, assented to the general truth that all mankind are the offspring of God. They are so, inasmuch as He is the author of their being, the Creator of the world and of all things therein. In this sense, therefore, the Grecian poet quoted by Paul spoke truly. In this sense, however, not man only, but all the irrational creation, are the offspring of God. He is their Creator, their

Preserver, and their Proprietor. In the Fiftieth Psalm He says, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine." In the sense of the poet just spoken of they are God's offspring, and, as the Bible tells us, they are the objects of His perpetual care, not in a general way, but particularly; for our Saviour assures us that a sparrow—one single sparrow—"can not fall to the ground without your Father." He does not say "*their* Father," but "*your* Father." They are the objects of His preserving care, but they are not His children. That is a relation which they are incapable of bearing; therefore, although their Maker may hold the relation of Proprietor, Preserver, and Benefactor to them, a Father He can not be; for that is a reciprocal relation, and requires another party capable of bearing the relation of son or child.

Luke, in tracing the genealogy of Christ back to the prime ancestor of the race, says in conclusion, that Adam was "the son of God." It is easy to understand this, for he was a rational being, a free agent, a subject of moral law, and as such capable of bearing the relation of a son to God, the Author of his being, his Sovereign and his Father, whose image he bore. His rank was immeasurably higher than that of the fowl or the brute; yet it was "a little lower" than that of the angels. In him the material and the spiritual were blended. If he looked below him to the animal creation he found much in common, much with which he could sympathize, even as far as an interchange of reciprocal

affection. The poet Burns, in one of his letters, expresses a beautiful thought in saying that man is the dog's god—the highest being of whom he is capable of forming any conception; and therefore he loves him and serves him with a degree of faithfulness and devotion strongly analogous to the worship which man in his best state renders to his Maker. Then if Adam looked above, he saw spiritual beings a little higher than himself, with whom, as a spiritual being he had much in common, and with whom he could enter into loving sympathy and fellowship. Thus he and they, although dwelling in different spheres, and vastly different in their organisms—they being pure spirits, while in him were blended the animal and the spiritual—yet both were children of one Father. Thus was Adam, before he became a transgressor, a son of God. Thus did it please God to "centre in his make these strange extremes."

When God said, "Let us make man in our image," the fiat was only begun in Adam, but by no means completed. He fell quickly and forfeited all right in himself to claim the relation of a son of God. But yet he was not cast off. An obscure promise of a Deliverer was given at once; and thenceforward it became possible for men to live lives of faith. By faith Abel offered acceptable sacrifice, as, doubtless, his father Adam did also. By faith Enoch walked with God, and thus the long line of faithful worshippers in the early ages of the world looked forward to that One who was mighty to save. That is a sublime utterance which Elihu made in the presence of Job and his

friends, where, speaking of man in the generic sense, he said, "He (God) is gracious unto him and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a Ransom." This was a bright revelation of that great truth to be uttered probably before Abraham was called—that truth which shone brighter and brighter until the perfect day. We know in this day of Gospel light who that Ransom is; but those ancient believers were filled with hope and joy at the mere promise that a Deliverer would come, a Ransom would be paid.

We err if we entertain the thought that the fall of Adam was a great disaster. True, he was a son of God; but by transgression he forfeited that sonship, and that forfeiture was transmitted to all his posterity by natural generation. But who and what was Adam? He was but a man, a creature —lower than an angel, but higher than a mere animal. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 47) tells us that he was "of the earth, earthy." He was but the germ of the human race. He was the culmination and crown of the animal creation, with a spiritual nature in embryo, which linked him with the spiritual creation—with angels who are spirits, and with God the Father of spirits. This rendered him capable of being a subject of moral law, and of immeasurable exaltation. But in him the animal propensities came into conflict with moral law, which was the command of his Maker, a command so simple, so plain, so easy to obey, that he had abundant power to obey. But he did not. The history of this wicked and suffering world gives, as nothing else can give so graphically, the conse-

quences of that first transgression. Eve's confession—it is not an apology—"The serpent beguiled me and I did eat," shows us what evil outside influence was exerted to bring about this fatal disaster to an embryo race, as Satan unquestionably supposed it would be.

But to suppose that in this affair of the forbidden fruit an all-wise and omnipotent God was in the slightest degree thwarted in His good intentions would be a monstrous error. He who is able to cause the wrath of man to praise Him, can make the same use of the malice of fiends. The devil was permitted to do enough to depose this man who was of "the earth, earthy" as the representative of his race, and make way for the Lord from heaven, to whom fell the birthright which the first Adam had forfeited. Hence Christ is called "the first-born among many brethren."

When God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and then formed of the dust of the ground the first man, and "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," the great fiat only began to be accomplished. Not until He had brought into the world in the fulness and perfection of manhood that wonderful Being who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person—that man whom Jehovah calls His fellow—that man to whom He says, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"—that man "who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, ... in whom all fulness dwells"—who was made for a little while lower than the angels for the suffering of death—who

was "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; who was so destitute in His life of labor and love that He had not where to lay His head—that divine man whose wondrous life filled and glorified all that lies between the throne of the Most High and the gibbet of the malefactor—all between the brightest glories of heaven and the darkness of the tomb—not till then was that fiat fully accomplished. Well might Isaiah write these glowing words of such a being: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Is. ix. 6).

Such is that glorious Being in whom we see the great original fiat, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," fully and perfectly accomplished. Not a lineament of that likeness is lacking either in fidelity or glory; for the Scriptures of truth declare Him to be "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person." And yet He is man, "the Son of man," as He so often called Himself, and in which title He seemed to take peculiar delight. At the same time He is the Son of God. "Thou art my Son," says God, "this day have I begotten thee." Can we understand these wonderful words in any other than a literal sense as relating to the incarnation, and as addressed as much to the human as to the divine element in His person? The history of the incarnation, as given in plain and simple language by the evangelists, leaves us no warrant to believe that God is not as truly the Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ in His humanity as in His divinity—in His corporeal nature as in His spiritual. Dare we say that the Triune God is not as truly united with the humanity of our Redeemer as with His divinity? "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," said Jesus to Philip, who had expressed a desire to see the Father. Now all that Philip had seen or could see in his mortal life was the corporeal part of his Lord; yet he is emphatically assured that in seeing Him he had seen the Father. Truly all this is to us profoundly mysterious; but our Lord's reply to Philip ought to be sufficient to deter theological experts from carrying Him into their dissecting room, and dividing Him, so that they can lay His divinity here and His humanity there, assigning to each division its appropriate functions.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, exclaims, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." The word manifest is defined by Webster to be "plain; open; clearly visible to the eye or obvious to the understanding; apparent; not obscure or difficult to be seen or understood." Apply this definition to the words of our Lord to Philip: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and it enables us to understand how God was manifest in the flesh. In Jesus of Nazareth, therefore, we behold not the Son only, but the Father. This wonderful fact is stated in terms as simple and plain as they can be. When we meet with such revelations as this our part is to "believe only." Paul does no more; only remarking, in adoring wonder, that it is a great mystery.

I propose to follow this subject up in another article. "The old, old story" is by no means exhausted; and, old as it is, I think it is possible to say some things about it which have never before been said.

THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON.

IN a previous article the Fatherhood of God was discussed. I now propose to trace the same inspiring theme through the revelation of the Son of God; a revelation at once so simple that a child can receive it intelligently; yet so deep, so high, so mysterious, that no created mind can fully comprehend it.

John, in the introduction of his Gospel, says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The truth stated in these few plain but sublime words is as incomprehensible as is the Infinite One of whom they tell us. They speak of a Being under the name of the Logos, or the Word (which is but a translation of the same word into English), who was in the beginning with God, and who was God. In the eighth chapter of Proverbs a mysterious being is introduced to us under the name of Wisdom—not an abstract principle, but a real personage who speaks for himself, saying: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." For the whole of that grand and mysterious passage—one of the brightest of the revelations of that Being who in His essence is altogether incomprehensible which is to be found in the sacred volume (see Proverbs viii. 22–31). The key to it we find in what John says of

the Logos, or the Word, in his introduction, and in the words of our Lord Himself, where again and again He speaks of having come down from heaven, but more especially where He says in His great intercessory prayer: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." To us this, together with other passages just quoted or referred to, seems to indicate distinctness and separateness of personality; yet the identity of the Father and the Son is quite as plainly and distinctly declared by the same infallible authority. "The Word was God," says John in his introduction. "I and the Father are one," says Jesus, for which utterance the Jews threatened to stone Him. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," said He to Philip. Again, while following out the same great truth, He said, "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me."

In these great sayings believers are able to see, as far as it is given to finite minds to see and comprehend, the great mystery of God manifest in the flesh. Adam, the prime ancestor of the race, had fallen and lost his birthright. All we his offspring had fallen with him and were thrown into a state of orphanage. All went astray like lost sheep. None did good; no, not one. The ruin of the race seemed to finite minds to be total and irremediable. No created arm was strong enough to repair the breach between man and his Maker. Upon this background of awful darkness, God, in the greatness of His wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, found His opportunity to exhibit

before the eyes of all holy beings such a display of the glory of His character as they could never in any other way have been favored with. We are told that angels desire to look into it. Let our Redeemer Himself tell what God did for this ruined race, in His recorded discourse with Nicodemus, as they sat together as friend with friend in the quiet of the evening in serious conversation. "God," said He, "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The next two verses I copy from the revised version. "For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him. He that believeth on Him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." In these few words, clear and simple as they are, is compressed the great central truth of the redemption of the world. But here we meet with a term not found in the passages before quoted of the pre-existence of this Being whom Solomon calls Wisdom, whom Isaiah calls Wonderful, whom John calls the Word, and whom an angel bade Joseph his reputed father call Jesus. That term is "THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD." Twice, with strong emphasis, does our Lord use this most significant phrase in the few words just quoted. John (i. 14) calls Him "the only begotten of the Father," and in verse 18, "the only begotten Son."

In the Second Psalm there is a remarkable expression: "I will declare the decree: The Lord

hath said unto me, 'Thou art my Son; *this day* have I begotten thee.'" If we understand the words "this day" to mean the period during which mortal men shall occupy this planet, it is impossible for theologians to maintain the doctrine of the *Eternal* Sonship of Christ. Nowhere do the Scriptures teach that dogma. The doctrine of God being manifest in the flesh is a great mystery, as Paul says it is; but to pile upon this another mystery, that this ineffable relation of Father and Son is eternal—that is, that it had no beginning—imposes upon our faith and credulity a tenfold strain, and involves a proposition which, in a matter less sacred and less awful, we should pronounce an absurdity. But in the beautiful simplicity of the Word of God there are no absurdities. Let us therefore go back to the simple narrative which Luke gives of the events which fulfilled that great decree spoken of in the Second Psalm, and other similar prophecies. I shall quote but three verses from his first chapter. He says: "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (verses 26, 27). We now pass on to the thirty-fifth verse: "And the angel answered and said unto her, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; *therefore* (note the word), THEREFORE also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.'" Surely such a paternity warrants our accepting in childlike faith the fact that the Son of

Mary is in the simplest verity the Son of God; that He is "the only begotten of the Father." By this most wonderful of all transactions God became manifest in the flesh. In this way the Word, who was with God, and who was God, became flesh and dwelt among us as the Only Begotten.

After Adam fell from his primitive position as the head and representative of his race, and took his place as one poor sinner among many—after his first-born son had murdered his righteous brother Abel—after Adam had lived amid these gloomy surroundings for one hundred and thirty years, we read that he "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth." Observe how careful the inspired historian is to tell us in whose image and likeness Seth was begotten. Both father and son were sinners; yet both, we may hope, lived lives of faith and penitence, and, like Abel, offered acceptable sacrifice which foreshadowed that blood which cleanseth from all sin. The stream, however, could rise no higher than the fountain. Such seems to be God's law in relation to man. Seth was his father's equal, his image; he was like him. On the same principle, and by the same law, the Son of God, the Son of Mary, the Man Christ Jesus, thought it no robbery to be equal with His Father, His only Father, as He was the only begotten Son of His Father. His Father was divine; could He be less? True, it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren whom He came to save; but that did not make Him any the less glorious as God; and in the midst of all His weakness, toil. and suffering, He put forth at times

the full power and glory of the Almighty. Reasoning from the same law of which we have just spoken in the case of Adam and Seth, we reach the sure conclusion that Jesus was altogether divine, while we know that He was altogether human—in a word, that He was, while He lived on earth, the God-man—and so He will ever be. Thus was God made manifest in the flesh; and John says: "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Yet John when he wrote these words was only a mortal man, and was incapable of beholding anything but what was corporeal. He saw that glory as it shone in His flesh. In other words, he saw God manifest in the flesh. He saw what Moses prayed to see, the glory of God. But that privilege could not be granted to Moses; for Jehovah had not then become manifest in the flesh. But Peter, James, and John did see it in the holy mount, and so did Moses, while His person shone with a brightness which could not be described, as for a short time He stood talking with Moses and Elijah of His approaching death. They were also in glory. John probably alludes to this glorious transfiguration when he says he saw His glory. Peter in one of his epistles pointedly speaks of it. He and his companions saw *His* glory. It was not the glory of the Father, the absolute God; for that was shown in the cloud which overshadowed them, and from which came the voice: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." It was the person of their Master, the flesh, *in* which, not *through* which, the God of glory was

made manifest, and that glory John says was the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father. Then for the first time was Jesus exhibited to human eyes as "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person." Then was the original fiat fully accomplished, and not till then, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

So far I have not indulged in speculation, or ventured upon far-fetched inferences, but only endeavored to make text shine upon text. Allow me, however, to depart from that rule in saying what I reverently believe, that such a being, such a man, as Jesus Christ could not have been produced by any creative act. I regard that word "Begotten," which He Himself so often used, as one of infinite significance and of transcendent importance. By an act of direct and immediate paternity the infinite and eternal God became the Father of one man equal to Himself in power and glory, so that through Him He could gather to Himself a multitude of children that no man can number, brethren of His Only Begotten Son, and who should, like Him, be partakers of the divine nature. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

This outburst of adoring wonder on the part of the great apostle, in which he has reached the utmost range of thought and language, and who beyond that line saw still higher wisdom, brighter glories, things altogether unspeakable, gives us his conception of the glories of Immanuel. In thinking or speaking of Jesus of Nazareth, the only begotten

Son of God, exaggeration is impossible; for, as the Baptist tell us, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him." This is a most remarkable utterance. Let us bring the light of another equally wonderful text to bear upon it. Paul, in his Epistle to the Colossians, says, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "All the fulness" agrees with the "without measure" of the Baptist; and both express infinity in the most absolute sense. Any thing, any quantity, less than infinite can be and is measured; but the fulness of the Godhead which dwells in Christ is immeasurable. How great, therefore, is that Man in whom the entire, the undivided, the one living and true God, dwells bodily, so that He could and did in calm assurance say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father!"

I have said, "how great is that Man!" I know that this is a subject which the human mind can not fathom; but we read that "God was manifest in the flesh." This faith can receive, although the intellect labors in vain to grasp the truth so plainly stated. We read that in Christ dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily—not only spiritually, but bodily. We read that our Lord told Philip in the plainest possible words, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and yet Philip had not seen, and could not see, more than the corporeal frame of his Master. And we read in words as plain as words can be, that the Word which was God, and by whom or through whom all things were made, was made flesh and dwelt among us. Can we comprehend all this? Not fully. Can we believe it? Yes, easily; and the more childlike our faith the more

fully can we comprehend it. Can we comprehend eternity or infinite space? No, certainly; for the utmost stretch of our imagination or calculating powers is as nothing in such an effort. Can we believe in them? Yes; for we *know* that duration and space are necessarily infinite. Our faith never staggers at that truth. Do we believe that God is infinite in wisdom and power? We never hesitate to accept that as an abstract truth. Do we believe that He could unite Himself to One bearing our nature, to a man, in such a manner that He and that man should be one and inseparable in nature, a perfect unit? The New Testament gives us a united Christ, not a divided one. It says nothing about two distinct natures in one person; but it does say all that is quoted above, and much more to the same effect.

Moreover the New Testament has much to say of the body of our Lord. It was in His body, His flesh, that God was and is manifested. "The Word was made flesh." Jesus often speaks of His flesh and blood. "This is my body which is broken for you"; "This is my blood which was shed for many." It was the body of the Lord which was buried and which rose again. Paul speaks of believers' bodies being made like Christ's glorious body. This body —the paternity of which we have already considered—was and is both human and divine. Has He a human soul? Unquestionably; for He is a perfect man, in all things like unto His brethren. He was, is yet, and ever will be, a perfect man, and in that man dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily. These are at once plain facts, yet profound mysteries. The simple-hearted believer can receive

them readily as far as the human mind can grasp them at all; but when metaphysicians attempt to explain them, to analyze them, they only "darken counsel by words without knowledge."

It would be well if the world's great thinkers, in the domains of both science and theology, could be brought to see that the fields in which their own observing and reasoning powers can operate are exceedingly limited when compared with the infinite ocean of truth which lies beyond; and it would save a vast amount of controversy about questions of doubtful disputation were they able or willing to see the limits of their respective fields. When humble, childlike faith is suffered to guide the mind of the Christian into realms which, but for divine revelation, are utterly unknowable, he can see clearly sublime and glorious truths which are hid from the man who attempts to carry his own metaphysical powers beyond the boundary of the knowable. This thought gives great impressiveness to the joyful outburst of our Lord, when He thought and spoke of these higher truths: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes!"

I close with the single remark, that the longer I study the revelations we have of the nature of Christ, the more I see that His being, and the elements of His being, have length, and breadth, and height, and depth too vast, too glorious, too wonderful, too mysterious for us to comprehend, until, like Him, we too are "filled with all the fulness of God," as Paul expresses it in Ephesians iii. 19.

THE CHILDREN OF GOD

IN two recent articles I gave my views on "The Fatherhood of God," and also on "The Only Begotten Son." From these highest of all themes—profound, mysterious, incomprehensible, glorious—the descent to common mortals, to ourselves, is easy. On this part of our comprehensive subject the inspired volume is rich and full.

When the Word was made flesh He came unto His own. They, as a people, as a nation, received Him not; but many individuals did receive Him, did believe on Him, and of them it is written, "to them gave He power to become the sons of God." In the revised version the passage reads thus: "He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name." The most material difference between the two renderings is in the words "power" and "right." For my own part I prefer the revised rendering; for the old version might lead some readers to imagine that they had in themselves some ability or power in the work of establishing this great relationship; whereas it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God bestowed solely through the merits, the obedience, and the atoning death of the one Mediator between God and the sinner. This view brings the text into harmony with 1 John

i. 9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"; and also with Romans viii. 1: "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." In these precious texts we see the ground upon which the believer may claim the right—not merely on the score of grace and mercy, but of justice—to the place of a son or daughter of the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. vi. 18).

In discussing "the Fatherhood of God," I expressed the belief that Adam by his transgression lost his right to the relation of a son, a right which he could only regain by faith in a promised Deliverer, just like any other poor sinner. He and all his posterity fell into a state of alienation. They were lost. In the Fourteenth Psalm the moral condition of the world is thus depicted: "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." In the face of this fearful picture how forcible are the words of Jesus: "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost!" Yet, although the world of mankind had thus fallen so low that all had become filthy, not one did good—so fallen that they sunk lower and lower, and wandered farther from God in each succeeding generation—yet God loved them still—so loved them that He sent His only begotten Son to save them—so loved them that He Himself took on Him the likeness of sinful flesh, became a man, the Only Begotten of the Father; and upon this

Man Jehovah laid the iniquity of us all. All this He did "that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people." In this way He who is in a pre-eminent sense the Son of God, and who, by assuming our nature, became the Son of Man, purchased for all who believe on Him the right to become children of God in a sense immeasurably above what they could have inherited from their natural ancestor, no matter how true and obedient he might have been. This fall and rising again brought mankind—those of them who accept of the Saviour's call to come unto Him—into a relation to God such as they could never have reached in any other way. They are born again; they are made new creatures; their natural spiritual life, such as Adam possessed, having become extinct through sin, is replaced by a life derived immediately from God through the Spirit. Hence believers in Jesus become literally and truly partakers of the Divine Nature, as truly so, in their measure, as Christ Himself. He is the only begotten Son. From Him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and who is therefore absolutely infinite, all life flows. But the life which He gives to His ransomed ones, to those whom the Scriptures call "the heirs of salvation," is a part of His own divine life, which makes them a "peculiar people." But more than this: it makes them His brethren, and sharers in that relation which He Himself holds to the Father. Hence their union with Christ by faith lifts them up to the rank and dignity of sons or children of God. Such love passeth knowledge. John, in view of it,

bursts out into words of rapturous astonishment, exclaiming, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"

We have spoken of the life which Christ gives to His ransomed ones. That life is a peculiar life. He says: "I give unto them eternal life." Again: "This is eternal life, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Jesus often speaks of eternal life, and so do the apostles, in such a way as to warrant us in putting a far higher construction upon the words than merely as expressive of an unending existence in a state of blessedness. I believe that it means a vital union between that Infinite Life which has neither beginning nor end, and the sinner, who was dead, but has been made alive again, who was lost, but is found.

We know very little—we might say we know nothing—of what is going on in the countless suns and systems scattered all around us, and stretching away through depths of space which the strongest telescopes can not fathom. But we do know that that wonderful Being who was slain on Calvary for our redemption, and rose again for our justification, said to His brethren just before He ascended to His throne on high, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." Now that empire which He thus claimed embraces all created things, for both heaven and earth are included. It was a man who said that; therefore a human hand this day wields the sceptre of the universe. What Paul says in Phil. ii. 9-11, warrants us in entertaining this won-

derful thought, "God also hath highly exalted him (he says) and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "The name of Jesus," —Christ's human name—the name given from heaven to His reputed father before His birth in Bethlehem—is above every other name. It is a name to which all creation does homage. This forbids the thought that in all the unnumbered worlds, visible and invisible to us, which revolve around us on every hand, there is another Being so great, so good, so wise, so powerful as that blessed One who gave Himself for us, and died on this planet for our salvation. How great, therefore, must they be who stand to Him in the relation of brethren, who are joint heirs with Him, and partners of His throne! John, in writing his epistle, thought of this; but all he could say was, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know (he does not say we believe, or hope, but we *know*) that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is."

When Jesus was laboring to cheer and comfort His desponding disciples on the last night which He spent with them before He suffered, He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." I have often pondered these sublimely beautiful, yet mysterious, words. I think the phrase, "my Father's house," means this vast universe, these heavens which declare His glory. "If it were not so I would have told you," He continues, and then He adds,

"I go to prepare a place for *you*." This, too, is very mysterious. When Adam was created and set over this planet as its monarch, the first thing to be done was to find a suitable companion for him. Then the lower orders of animated nature were made to pass before him; but no suitable mate was found for the man. Then was a woman, a helpmeet, a wife, prepared expressly for him, and man was no longer alone, a hermit, in this world which was so full of living things. Can not we find in this incident a key to the mysterious promise of our Lord that He will go to prepare a dwelling-place suitable for Himself and His Bride the Church, made up of all who, in every age and nation, shall believe on His name? Paul, in writing to the Ephesians (v. 29–32), had this relation among mortals in his mind, and used it to illustrate a far higher relation. He says: "No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church; for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery. But I speak concerning Christ and the Church."

Thus are the dearest and most intimate of earthly relations, the parental, the filial, the fraternal, and the conjugal, all brought into service to enable us as far as possible to comprehend that "love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Indeed, as John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be"; for the closest and dearest of all relations of which we have any knowledge are used to set forth the love of Christ for those for whom He died. We

read, "whom He justifies them He also glorifies." And in His intercession (John xvii. 22), Jesus says, "The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them." He received that glory beyond measure; they receive it to the measure of their utmost capacity. It is more than a creature's glory; for it is the same that the Father gave to the Son. In Him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily; they, on the other hand, are, as Paul expresses it, "filled with all the fulness of God." So glorious are Christ's redeemed that He is not ashamed to call them brethren. If they are His brethren, then they have the same right that He has to claim God as their Father; for, as it is written, "to them gave He the right to become children of God" (John i. 12. Revised version). "Behold," says John, in wonder and adoration, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"

In our English translations, both the old and the revised, the word Adoption is used to express the manner in which a redeemed sinner reaches the place of a child in God's family. But that word—although it is the best we have in our language—falls far short of expressing the idea which the Scriptures just quoted give of that relation. A man may adopt a child, and throw around him all the forms of law and all domestic endearments; but he can not make him really his child. He will still lack the all-important element of consanguinity. But the child of God, born of the Spirit, washed in the atoning blood of Jesus, becomes a partaker of the divine nature, and is really, truly, literally, a child of God.

THE PERSON OF OUR LORD.

F the absolute Deity we know nothing. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i. 18). "Declared Him"—revealed Him, made Him known. The phrase "only begotten Son" has, I think, reference alone to the incarnation. What Gabriel said to Mary, when he told her of the miraculous conception of which she was soon to be the subject, favors this idea. His words were—"therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." As a child, and as a man, He was really, truly, literally, and physically the Son of God, and in all these was consequently, necessarily divine. In this way that holy thing which was born of Mary, while as perfectly human as any child ever was, was God's Son, and was, for that reason—"therefore"—called the Son of God, as Gabriel said. He was God's Son in all the complicated elements of His nature, body, soul, and spirit—all divine, all human—the God was man, the man was God.

What relation existed between the Father and that mysterious ONE whom John calls the *Logos*, who was with God, and who was God, and by whom all things were made, is to us an impenetrable mystery, unknown and unknowable. In the eighth chapter of Proverbs He is called Wisdom, and His

existence before the worlds were made is set forth in the strongest and sublimest terms. John calls Him the Word; but the depth of meaning there is in that term is infinitely beyond the reach of the human mind. Christ Himself speaks in His prayer (John xvii.) of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. But in all the Scriptures there is no place where Christ bears the title of Son until He became such in the incarnation, which made Him, what He so often called Himself, the Son of Man.

When Christ appeared to John on Patmos in such glory that the beloved disciple, who once leaned on His bosom in affectionate confidence and easy familiarity, fell at His feet as dead, did He come as God, or as man, or as both? Unquestionably both. Hear what He says: "Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death." No one less than divine could utter such words as these; and yet He says He was dead. Who was dead? Was God dead? Or is it a man who is speaking? It is; and yet that man is God—that God is a man. We can only use the exclamation of the great apostle: "Great is the mystery of godliness! God was manifest in the flesh." He seems in this wondrous vision to be all divine; yet He says He was dead. He had not forgotten Calvary amid the splendors of heaven. In this passage the perfect unity of the divine and the human in the person of Christ is so set forth that it seems to be impossible to separate them even in thought.

Christ is a perfect unity and not a duality as some would have us believe. It is all wrong in any one to say, as some do, that while He dwelt upon earth as a mortal man, as He really was, He acted at one time as a man, at another time as God. Such teaching makes Him a compound being, a duality, or rather two beings linked together in one person.

But how can Christ be both God and man and yet a perfect unity? That is a question that passeth knowledge. Paul did not attempt to tell us, neither did Jesus Himself; yet He said to His sorrowing disciples, who were gazing upon His beloved face on the saddest and darkest night that He lived on earth, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In that great utterance there is a unity spoken of deeper and more mysterious still. Here we can not comprehend; we can only believe. It is true; but how it is true we can not understand.

I think we err when we imagine the humanity of Christ to be inferior to the Divinity. Both are infinitely exalted. To ask how that can be is to ask an unanswerable question; yet the same voice which but a moment before had, in the great vision on Patmos, claimed to be "the Almighty," said, "I am He that was dead."

Allow me to quote a few words from the remarkable discourse with which Rev. Francis L. Patton, D.D., opened the last General Assembly:

"A human heart is beating in the bosom of God; a human hand holds the sceptre of the world; and the Monarch of the Universe is the elder brother of mankind. . . . . The Logos was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and the union of God and man in the person of the Saviour

is the thought that has controlled the history of the world. . . . . Let us honor Christ. Let us vindicate the true place of man in the mind of God by making the person of our Lord the centre of all our thoughts. The *Logos* assumes a human nature, and so God becomes man. Man takes the Holy Spirit to his heart, and so becomes a partaker of the Divine nature."

The study of the stupendous mystery of God manifest in the flesh, and the relation established between the Eternal God and ourselves by the Incarnation, is transcendently more important than any other to which we can turn our thoughts. So deep, so high, so vast is the theme that we shall probably never fully grasp it through the everlasting ages in which it will be our privilege to see face to face our Divine Brother who was dead but is alive for evermore, and to be with Him and to become more and more like Him by partaking more and more of the Divine nature; for the promise is that we shall be like Him when we shall see Him as He is. Here in this life we can begin this study, and get a faint glimpse of the glories of Immanuel; there we shall continue it for ever and ever, without ever reaching the length and breadth and height and depth of either the greatness, or the glory, or the love of Christ, all of which pass finite knowledge. Yet, great, glorious, and good as He is, He is our fellow-man, our Brother. "Behold, what wondrous grace the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"

CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO JOHN THE BAPTIST.

FOR rebuking the tyrant Herod, because he had taken his brother's wife, John the Baptist was thrown into prison. Like Ahab, Herod seems to have been ruled by a woman who was worse than he was himself. He had a profound respect for John. He feared him, "knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him he did many things, and heard him gladly" (Mark vi. 20). In the same way Ahab feared Elijah and did his bidding; but whether he heard him gladly we are not so sure. At Carmel he was as submissive and obedient as a man could be. But in both cases there was a power behind the throne greater than the throne itself—behind Ahab's throne was Jezebel; behind that of Herod stood a woman equally wicked and determined. When Jezebel threatened the life of Elijah he fled; when Herodias demanded the head of John, it was given to her; for he was in prison and could not fly. In neither case could the wretched husbands and slaves of these domestic tyrants resist their will, or shield the objects of their vengeance. Both the men were grossly wicked and consequently weak; but neither of them was by any means as ferocious as the still wickeder woman to whom they were respectively allied.

How long John lay in prison we know not; but

it is plain that he was not under sentence of death. To his ardent and active spirit such confinement would be a sore trial. We know that his disciples—a band growing smaller and smaller—still had access to him; for Herod probably treated him as kindly as he dared to do. Meantime Jesus of Nazareth, whom John had baptized and introduced to the people of Israel as the Lamb of God, was actively prosecuting His great mission, and His fame was spreading abroad. He was increasing, as John had said He would, while John was decreasing. But, so far as the sacred history goes, Jesus acted as if He had forgotten that such a man as John existed. This to him would be a sore trial, and day by day his mind would sink into deeper gloom and despondency. Would the true Messiah suffer him to be there? or would he treat him with such neglect? Such painful questions as these would naturally arise in his mind, and cause some measure of doubt. At length he could stand it no longer. Calling two of his faithful disciples, he sent them to Jesus with the awful inquiry: "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?"

To have sent a merely verbal reply to such a question would have been idle, for that any pretender could do. Jesus knew this. He knew what was in the mind of John. He knew that his messengers were coming; and by the unseen operation of His power He assembled a group of unconscious witnesses; for in that same hour, Luke tells us (vii. 21), "He cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind He gave sight." Then turning to John's

messengers He said: "Go your way and tell John what things ye have seen and heard: how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them; and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." Thus was Heaven's seal set upon the brow of the humble Nazarene in the presence of John's messengers, attesting His claim to be the ONE that should come, the Messiah of the Old Testament prophets. That was what John wanted. It was not so much to know that a great prophet had arisen; but does that prophet prove himself to be the very one "of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write"? That was the question; and Jesus, in every clause of His answer, points to a distinct prediction of one or another of the old prophets, after having plainly fulfilled each prediction before the eyes of John's witnesses. A sublimer or more wonderful incident than this is not to be found in the gospel narratives.

But it is to the last and crowning clause that I wish more particularly to draw attention at present. Miracles of power, as all but the last in this category were, strike the minds of many people most strongly; and in reading this passage they suppose, when they come to the words "the dead are raised," that they are through with the list of the credentials from on high, and exclaim, "That's all." But the greatest of all remains in the crowning declaration that "to the poor the gospel is preached." Turn to the opening verses of Isaiah lxi. for one of the grandest predictions of the Mes-

siah ever penned by an ancient prophet, and the one which Jesus Himself read in the synagogue of Nazareth as His own commission from God, and you will see that I do not err in making that concluding clause the crown and culmination of this glorious list of evidences; for Jesus Himself chose it, saying, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." To John's troubled mind that would be the most satisfactory of any, for well he knew that in that passage in Isaiah is given the fullest, the clearest, and the most beautiful delineation of the Messiah to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Our translators have made Isaiah say, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Jesus read from the Septuagint, and what He read is rendered in our version in these words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Here very little is said of miracles of power, but the passage is as full as it can be of miracles of grace; and the sum of it was compressed by our Lord in His message to John into the brief clause, "the poor have the gospel preached to them." What Luke renders "the gospel to the poor" is expressed in Isaiah lxi. 1

by the phrase, "good tidings unto the meek,' which means the same thing.

This feature of Christ's kingdom upon earth, like charity among the Christian graces, still abides as its brightest and best and most enduring characteristic; while the miraculous, having served its purpose, has long since ceased. The world, under the guidance of the prince of this world, has, it is true, interposed serious barriers to this work, which Christ Himself claimed as the crowning glory of His kingdom, in the shape of costly and luxurious edifices and gaudy apparel, all of which are calculated to foster the lust of the eye and the pride of life, and in the presence of which the poor in worldly goods are shamed and humiliated, and in some cases even debarred from the house of God. Still it is true — though not as universally true as it ought to be — that "to the poor the gospel is preached." The Bible says in one place, "The poor and the rich meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all." In His presence all are alike poor; and surely His presence is the last place in which to make a display of our worldly wealth. When we enter that presence, let us keep in mind the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

THE EVIL ONE.

THE revisers of the New Testament have changed the closing petition of the Lord's Prayer from "*Lead* us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," to "*Bring* us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." There is but a shade of difference between the words lead and bring, a difference which it is easier to put than to define. Bring is expressive of a less direct and active agency on God's part than lead. James makes the matter clear when he says, "God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." But we all know that we may be brought into circumstances which may draw us from the path of rectitude. Against this Jesus teaches us to pray.

But the final clause, "Deliver us from the evil one," startled the whole Christian world. To have the mind brought back from a world of wicked, bad, injurious, hurtful, calamitous things, the opposite of what we call good, and concentrated upon one personal being, who, in the inspired volume, is called the Evil One, was a change so great that nearly everybody revolted against it. But those profound scholars who made the change in the translation tell us that it is the true rendering of the inspired original, and that they could not do otherwise.

The belief in the existence of the great adversary of God and man as an active and dangerous agent of evil is not held at present in that realizing sense which it was in times not very remote. Luther's

life was almost one perpetual battle with the devil and Bunyan lets us know what he thought on that subject when he tells us so graphically of the desperate battle between Christian and Apollyon. That strong conception which eminent Christians of three, two, and even one century ago held of the great adversary was in perfect accordance with the mind of the apostle Peter, who knew him so well from his own bitter experience. He, in the closing chapter of his first epistle, exhorts believers to "be sober, to be vigilant (or watchful, as the revised version reads); because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." And Jesus Himself, but a short time before He taught His disciples that prayer, had a fierce conflict in the desert with the evil one.

But the wretched superstitions which grew up in the minds of the ignorant respecting witches and witchcraft, and the horrid wrongs and barbarities which resulted from such notions, caused such a revulsion in the minds of intelligent people, that the idea of a personal devil was almost swept away with the superstitions which had gathered around him. A vague, undefined abstraction took his place which was called evil. The new reading which the revisers have given us brings us back from an abstraction which has neither metes nor bounds to a fixed centre of thought, a doctrine which is clearly taught in the inspired volume, to wit, the personality of Satan, and to his evil designs. Jesus knew what He was saying when He told Simon and his fellow-disciples that Satan desired to have them that he might sift them as wheat. It were rank nonsense to talk of an abstract principle having a desire.

But what is evil? We don't know. Our Episcopal brethren pray that the good Lord would deliver them "from battle and murder and sudden death," and many other things regarded as evil. Now the good Lord may send any or all these terrible things, not as evils, but as good, just as He permitted Satan to sift Peter and his fellow-disciples. It was good for them and good for believers in all ages that they were subjected to that terrible ordeal. They were delivered, not from that trial, but from the Evil One. So in all trials, whether in the loss of property, loss of reputation, loss of friends, or of health, or in anything which we regard as afflictive or calamitous, the evil or the good turns altogether upon the way we are exercised by them. If they draw us in humble submission nearer to God, they are good; if they drive us away in sullen discontent and in a murmuring spirit, they are evil; for by such a spirit we fall an easy prey to that evil one, that roaring lion of whom Peter speaks as above quoted. There is, therefore, no such thing as abstract evil. If there were, God the Creator of all things must necessarily be its author. But when we find it in a rebellious creature, or in a host of them, as we do in what our great Teacher calls "the devil and his angels," beings who are the active agents of evil, we find something very different from an abstract principle. Satan and his evil angels stand before us as antipodes of God and His holy angels; and hence being supreme in his vast yet limited domain, he is called the Evil One, from whom our Great Deliverer teaches us to pray to be delivered.

NAMES WRITTEN IN HEAVEN.

IN the early part of the public ministry of Jesus He chose twelve men who were to be in a pre-eminent sense His disciples, His apostles, His witnesses. These men He invested with "power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." He sent them not to the Gentiles, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And He said, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils. Freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat." He then added many other words of encouragement and of warning. "Behold," said He, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." In this utterly destitute condition He sent them forth on their perilous mission. All the promise He gave was, "the workman is worthy of his food." But who would recognize that worthiness and provide that necessary food? Would they be left to the mercy of the wolves among whom He was sending them—the men who should deliver them up to the councils and scourge them in their synagogues? Certainly

not; but He Himself would see to it that their wants were supplied and their lives preserved. He sent them out; His presence went with them; His power was exerted through them, and above them was His own everlasting arm to guard them, guide them, provide for them, and keep them in safety. Thus early were they taught practically to live lives of faith on the Son of God.

Luke, in his tenth chapter, tells us that "after these things the Lord appointed other seventy, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place whither He Himself would come." We know not the names of these seventy men, nor whether this was their first and only distinct commission; but we may be very sure that they were true believers in Jesus. They too were sent out without purse or scrip, and in all respects their instructions were similar to what the Master had given to the twelve. Whether He sent the twelve out two and two we are not informed; but probably not. Every man, therefore, of these seventy, had a companion to strengthen and cheer him in his arduous work of evangelization. Of the success of the twelve we have no distinct account; but the mission of the seventy seems to have been a grand success.

How long they travelled from city to city proclaiming the coming kingdom and carrying healing and life and blessing to the people we are not informed. Probably theirs was a work of only a few days. We are told, however, that they returned again with joy, saying: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name." They seem to

have been greatly elated, perhaps unduly so, because the Lord had given them power over those foul and cruel spirits or demons who, while He was a man amongst men, were permitted to take possession of many unhappy mortals, depriving them of their own proper rationality, and inflicting upon them the miseries of fiends. This demoniacal possession was common just at that time. It prevailed like an epidemic; for we read in the Gospels of many cases, a few of which only are particularly mentioned. To say that these demoniacal possessions were nothing more than cases of deranged intellect—what we now call insanity—is attempting to be wise above what is written. In Christ mankind had God with them in His own proper person; in these unhappy people they had, at the same time, Satan and his emissaries with them in their own persons. It is, to be sure, a fearful thought; but if we take the words of the evangelists in their simple verity we can come to no other conclusion. In the Acts of the Apostles we have only one or two cases—just the last dregs, as it were, of this infernal invasion.

But these seventy humble disciples, who had no further official place in the kingdom of heaven, were overjoyed to think that through the name of Jesus of Nazareth they could send these terrible spirits back to their dark abode. Then Jesus said unto them, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." This great saying may reach back to the time when Satan and his rebellious followers were cast out of heaven and consigned to the place prepared for them; but doubtless it reaches forward to the time

when the works of the devil shall be utterly destroyed. After a few more cheering words to those faithful men, He added: "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." His words, "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you," are not to be understood as forbidding them to rejoice at all in their triumph over these evil spirits; but to rejoice not so much in that as in the far more important fact that their names are written in heaven. Their power over demons, their ability to heal diseases, and even to call the dead to life, were as nothing in comparison with having their names enrolled in the Lamb's book of life.

Christians of the present time are inclined to regard their brethren of a former age, who were endowed with miraculous powers, as peculiar favorites of Heaven, more highly privileged than are any now living. But this is a mistake, Jesus Himself being judge. The name of the poorest, the weakest believer is written in heaven; and in that record they have more honor, more cause of joy, than would the power to expel demons, or call the dead back to life, give them. It was very kind on the part of our blessed Lord to put on record what He said to those good men who had been out for a few days in His service, clothed with His own miraculous power, and who on their return, were so elated, so glad, that even the devils were subject unto them through His name. He let them know that they had a ground of joy immeasurably greater than that, great as that really was; but of which at the moment they probably thought but little—a ground

of rejoicing which they shared equally with both the greatest and the least of the children of God of all generations.

Jesus spoke with calmness, and yet with the utmost positiveness, of a great fact—"Your names are written in heaven!" He did not say, "Your names *will* be written in heaven," but they *are* written. There stand those names as God's Family Record of His children. No power in all the universe, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature" shall be able to erase that writing, or blot out the memory of "one of the least of these my brethren."

It is very strange that people who know, or ought to know, that they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and who, knowing this, know that their names are written in heaven, suffer the trifling things of this life, whether gains or losses, successes or reverses, the pleasures or the pains of life, the kindnesses or the injuries that they meet with, to have such effect upon them, and so disquiet them. We have seen that these seventy good men whom Jesus sent out were too much elated at the success which their Lord had given them, so that He had to moderate their joy, not by rebuking it, but by drawing their attention to a ground of joy which was incomparably higher and better. So let all who believe moderate the joys and sorrows of life by the sweet and calm reflection that their names are written in heaven. Earth has no honor, no profit, no success, no felicity equal to this. That name written there is our title-deed to all that our infinite, eternal, and

loving Father is able to bestow upon us; for it is written, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

THE WITHERED TREE.

"HEREIN is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit," said Jesus to His disciples in His last conversation with them before He suffered; and what He said to them He says to every one of His professed disciples. He often used the word "fruit" to express the result, the effect, the product of the principles which He through His word and Spirit plants in His field, which He says is the world, and in the hearts of all who hear that word. In the parable of the sower this subject is very clearly set forth. In Gal. v. 22, 23, the fruit of the Spirit is set forth in beautiful variety and clearness, thus: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." In the revised version, "gentleness" is translated "kindness"; "faith" is "faithfulness," that is, to speak nothing but the truth, and to perform all our engagements; and "temperance" is made "self-control" in the margin. The last word has a far wider range of meaning than merely abstinence from intoxicants.

Many years ago I had a simple-hearted and devout friend whom I occasionally met. Often, on taking leave of him, he would put a few tracts in my hand for distribution, with the earnest injunction—always in the same words—"Do all the good you can." These words of that good man made a strong impression upon me, for they embrace the

whole field of good works, and I have ever wished to make them the rule of my life. My good friend departed to a better world more than forty years ago. He was what men call poor; but he was rich in faith and good works, and, I doubt not, found much treasure in heaven when he arrived there.

But I fear I am wandering from the subject I had in my mind when I began, which was to speak of that fruitless fig-tree which Jesus blasted with His word. It seems like a little and unimportant incident among the events which crowded to fulness that wondrous life; but when we come to ponder its awful import, as it applies to every one of us, we discover in it something well calculated to make us tremble. Matthew (xxi. 19) narrates the incident thus:

"And when He saw a fig-tree in the way He came to it and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever. And presently the fig-tree withered away."

Why did He take such an interest in that tree? The preceding verse tells us. He had spent the night at Bethany, and "in the morning, as He returned into the city, He hungered." This shows us that He was subject to all the conditions of weakness and want common to that humanity which He had assumed, and that He really needed the fruit which He sought. So far the narrative was simply personal, and had that been all, the matter was hardly worthy of mention. But that He should kill the tree with His word, and so effectually blast it that, as Mark tells us, it was dried up from the roots

the next morning, is a miracle so unlike the general miracles of our Lord, that it seems to stand alone. Was He angry with the tree because it had disappointed Him? That were a low conception of the act or of its design, and would exhibit that all-perfect One as giving way to a blind and senseless passion against a thing totally devoid of responsibility, or of a knowledge of what had been done to it.

But let us regard that tree as an emblem of a professed disciple of Christ; of one who ought to bear good fruit, but does not; one who bears "leaves only," nothing else; of one who has a place among the disciples of Christ, and whose name is on the church rolls, who is found statedly and punctually in his or her place in the sanctuary and at the Lord's table; one, in short, who has all the appearance of a good fig-tree, but yet bears no fruit—all these other things being "leaves only"—then we shall begin to see the awful import of the narrative.

We are told that Jesus was hungry and needed the fruit. Is He hungry now? Yes, indeed; and He will continue to hunger as long as there are on the earth poor and suffering and benighted ones for whom He died. "I was an hungered and ye gave me meat," He will say to His fruit-bearing people at the great day. "Where? when?" it will be asked. He will then answer, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Thus does He identify Himself with His brethren of the human race even to the least and the lowest. If they are hungry, He hungers; if they are sick and in prison, so is He.

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel

to every creature," is the general order of our Commander-in-Chief; and to-day every door on earth is open to those who are inclined to distribute the bread of life to the perishing. By this opening of doors which the Church could not open, the Lord indicates to His people that He is "an hungered" beyond anything ever before known.

To send the Gospel to those who have long sat in darkness is one way to bear fruit; but it is only one among many. To "do all the good we can"—as my old friend said, to supply the physical wants of the needy, to teach the young and the ignorant; to give a kind word or an encouraging smile to the desponding or the sorrowing; to do all we can to render home what home should be; to be diligent in business, just and upright in our dealings, and contented with our lot—all these are fruits of the Spirit. But Paul tells us that the man of God, the Christian, must be thoroughly furnished unto *all* good works; and Peter in his second epistle gives the rule in these words: "Add to your faith virtue (firmness, courage), and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance (self-control), and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." Observe: Of this beautiful cluster—if we view it botanically, or this grand edifice, if viewed architecturally—faith is the root, the foundation. Apart from that, mere moral virtues are but branches separated from the parent vine, and must wither and die, or drop off as leaves do, and be blown away. All real fruit has its source and vitality in Christ. "Apart from me,'

says He, "ye can do nothing." We can bear no fruit that He can gather and garner up into everlasting life. "Leaves only," is the decision which He in His word renders of all such things.

Until Jesus visited it, searching for fruit, that fig-tree looked all right. It was probably rich in foliage, and very likely those who passed by admired it, just as people admired the Pharisees, and supposed that they were very holy men. But they had leaves only; and unseen by human eye the bolt of judicial wrath descended upon them. To them was said what was said to the tree—"Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever!" It was awfully verified in their case; but not more awfully than it will be in the case of all formal, fruitless professors. The Pharisees thought: "We have Abraham to our father"—therefore all is well. The others suppose that because they are members of the church in good standing, they are safe. Even after the same fatal sentence shall go forth in the councils of heaven, such people will continue to please themselves with the notion that the celestial gates will be open to them when they go over the river; and even at the last moment of mortal life they will comfort their mourning friends with the same assurance. This, I know, sounds harsh and terrible; but not more terrible than these words of Him before whose judgment-seat we must all stand: "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name have done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

IT was because of the beauty, durability, purity, and high commercial value of the pearl that our Lord chose it in one of His parables as an emblem of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew xiii. 45, 46). As the parable is very brief, let us quote it: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it."

I had always regarded that as expressive of the action of an awakened and inquiring sinner when he first perceives the way of salvation through the atonement of a crucified Redeemer, and who is ready to give up everything else for an interest in Him—to sell all that he has, as the Saviour expresses it. And if we take the words of Christ to the young man who had great possessions—"Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross and follow me"—we see that there is good ground for this exegesis. That young man did then and there find the pearl of great price, but he declined to buy it.

But a few days ago I heard from the pulpit another exegesis which thrilled my heart as new and great thoughts are apt to do. In that exposition, not the awakened and anxious sinner, but Christ

Himself, was represented by the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, and that in this world He found one of such amazing value that He gladly sold all that He had and bought it. Although He was rich, infinitely rich, this purchase made Him poor. For it He gave up the glories of heaven, and endured the toils, privations, and sorrows of earth, and, more than that, He sacrificed His life. God alone is able to estimate the price paid for that pearl.

He did buy it, and it is His now. Truly, its price was great. Neither the arithmetic of earth nor of heaven can compute it. Was the pearl He bought worth the price He paid for it? Infinite wisdom, as well as infinite goodness, had a part in this great transaction; therefore there can be no doubt as to the value of the pearl. It would not have been bought at all had it not been worth all that the Divine and infinitely wise Merchantman paid for it.

And what is that pearl? The Divine author of that parable calls it the kingdom of heaven. It is that "many" for whom He gave His life a ransom—His people, His ransomed ones, His Church. It is the soul of man, whether contemplated individually or collectively—yours and mine, dear reader, no matter how humble a view we may have of ourselves. To as many as receive Him, to them gives He power to become the sons of God. Now let us see what John says about that rank and dignity, and consequently that value: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

Many Christians are in the habit of thinking and speaking of themselves as worthless beings, and mistake that depreciation of themselves for humility. It is not that, but a reflection upon the wisdom and goodness of their Maker, both in their creation and in their redemption. Is that pearl which Christ purchased at so great a price a worthless thing? It verges upon blasphemy to say so. True, the sinner apart from Christ is a wretched being, but he is not worthless; and in Christ he is exalted to a rank to which probably no other creature can attain, and that rank is altogether based upon that purchase of which we have been speaking. It is therefore bad, offensive to God, and injurious to ourselves to underrate the value of those for whom Christ died. Let us rather dwell with rapture upon the fact that we are worth all that the great Merchantman paid for that pearl—that precious thing for which He gave up all that He had.

THAT OFT-QUOTED TEXT.

THOSE simple-hearted parents who brought their infant children to Jesus that He might touch them, were doing a greater work than they knew, and were impelled and guided by a higher wisdom than their own. It was, doubtless, a concerted matter among a few neighboring families of believers in Jesus, and they appear to have come together. The children were not diseased; but the parents — possibly only the mothers—had a strong desire that those healing hands, whose merest touch brought health and life to the sick and the dying, should be laid upon the heads of their infant offspring. We know not that their faith rose so high as to take hold on eternal life, nor does it matter. They were graciously accepted, approved, and blessed above all that they could ask or think.

When the little company arrived where Jesus was, the disciples, like a watchful outer guard, would inquire of them what they wanted, and when told they rebuked them, and, it may be, treated them unkindly, as though what they sought was something too childish, too trifling — an unwarranted liberty with their great Master, an assault upon His dignity, and an interference with His proper worth, which must not be tolerated. Now let us see what a mistake they made.

"When Jesus saw it He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God"; (and then He added) "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and blessed them" (Mark x.).

This tableau—so simple, so humble, so sublime—was the product neither of human wisdom nor of parental affection, although the latter was made to blend with it as a necessary and affecting factor. In this way Christ, in His adorable wisdom and power, set forth at once His loving-kindness to children as such, and, at the same time, that great principle in the kingdom of grace expressed by Himself in these words: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." He called His disciples by that endearing term just before He suffered (John xiii. 33), and repeatedly He uses the term "little ones." Paul calls the Galatians "my little children," and four times does John in his first epistle use the same tender term.

Let us, in illustration of this great principle, look at two cases where strong, resolute, and self-willed men were turned into little children by the sweetly subduing power of divine grace.

Peter, during the time he was with his Lord, was a rough, hardy fisherman, honest and true, but impetuous, impulsive, and self-reliant. He seemed, indeed, to act as if he felt himself to be the champion of his more gentle Master, as we learn from His rebuking him for declaring that His enemies

would put Him to death, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord. This shall not be unto Thee." There was not much of the spirit of a little child there. Again: "I will go with Thee to prison and to death." And again: "I will lay down my life for Thy sake." And again: "Though all men should deny Thee, yet will not I." These bold and confident expressions—yet as honest as they were bold—are not much like the utterances of a little child. At length the Master is arrested and offers no resistance; but Peter—brave, as a soldier is accounted brave—drew his sword and cut off a man's ear. That was anything but the act of a little child. Not being allowed to fight, he fled, for he had courage for nothing else. But his sincere love for his Master would not suffer him to stay away, so he followed Him afar off to the palace of the high-priest. There his courage failed utterly, and thrice he denied that he knew Him. The last time his old rough character broke out, and he began to curse and swear. So he fell as far as a man could fall, short of absolute perdition.

But then the cock crew, and "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter went out and wept bitterly." Then followed the awful tragedy of the next day; then the dark three days that the Lord lay in Joseph's tomb; then the agitation caused by the rumors of His resurrection. The strong, self-reliant Peter is utterly broken down and has become as a little child. Having nothing else to do, he and some of his fellow-disciples go a-fishing. They toiled all night, but without success. In the morning a stranger is seen standing on the

shore of the lake who directs them to cast the net on the right side of the ship. They obey, and immediately the net is full of fishes. "It is the Lord!" cries John, and instantly, regardless of fishes, net, and everything else, Peter plunges into the water and swims ashore to his much-loved Master. For the first time the rough, strong, impetuous sailor is a little child and acts like one. The old Simon is utterly broken down, and Jesus could have said then, as He said on the first occasion, "Suffer the little child to come unto me and forbid him not." And how like a child He meets him and talks with him—"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," is the childlike reply. Three times the question is asked, and three times the same unfaltering answer is returned. Thus Peter, after three years of tuition and discipline, has become a little child, and is in the kingdom of God, prepared to feed the lambs and the sheep as his Lord bade him; and thenceforward he stands before us among the grandest and most intrepid Christian heroes the world ever saw. Up to that time his rugged natural manhood kept the little child down, as is sadly true of multitudes of real Christians of the present day.

Saul of Tarsus was as honest a man as Peter; but he came to the conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth, who had recently suffered death as a malefactor, was an impostor, and in his impetuous zeal for Israel and Israel's God he conceived it to be his duty to crush out the sect that bore His name. He "breathed out threatenings and slaughter." Satan

was ruling him and using him at the very time when, to use his own language, he "verily thought he was doing God service." Every Bible reader is familiar with the wonderful story of his conversion on the road to Damascus. Never was there a man more unlike a little child than Saul was when Jesus let His glory shine upon him, and spoke to him in a tone at once of authority and expostulation, "Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?" Instantly the mad persecutor became a little child. Awe, reverence, and submission dictated his first words, "Who art Thou, Lord?" and when the astounding answer came, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," the little child, liberated from the clutches of the evil one, ran to Him, if not at first with joy, at least with a spirit of filial obedience, crying—"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The Lord had work for him, and grandly and faithfully he did it. No man ever left a more splendid record on earth, none wears a more glorious crown in heaven. The transformation of Peter from a strong, self-poised, natural man to a little child was the work of time and of varied and sore discipline; that of Saul of Tarsus was instantaneous.

The words of Christ are still living and authoritative words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." They apply to children in years, as at first; but they also apply to us all; for during all our lives we are or ought to be little children, and to suffer the simple trust, the humble, confiding faith, the meek submission, the outgushing affection of children to go out to our Heavenly Father, without a shadow of doubt that

He is our Father, and that He loves us. Each of us has such a child under his or her control; let us beware, then, lest we incur the displeasure of the Saviour, as the disciples did, by rebuking these childish outgoings of the soul toward Him. We, in our pride, think it more becoming to consecrate to Him our learning, our talents, our wealth, our influence—some great thing, as poor Peter imagined his sword to be—but His command is, "Suffer the little children"—simple trust, humble and unquestioning faith, deep-felt dependence, pure love—"to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

In Isaiah's magnificent imagery we have a picture not only of the world at large in the latter day, but of each regenerated human soul. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." All the warring elements of our nature brought into harmony and placed under the control of that which is esteemed the weakest and most defenceless of any. Let Christians, therefore, be careful how they crush back, and rebuke and forbid the growth, advance, and controlling power of the little child that is in them.

"THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN."

THIS is one of those great sayings of our Lord, which, although as simple as language can be, has a length and breadth and depth and height the extent of which the human mind can not fully measure.

Jesus in these words distinctly recognizes the Sabbath as an existing and permanent institution—one which was made by the Creator and Governor of the world for the good and well-being of man—not a particular set of men, not for the Jews only, but for all men from the first to the last. God made it as He made the light which shines upon us, the atmosphere we breathe, the food we eat, the raiment we wear, because He saw that it is one of our necessities.

In Genesis ii. 3, we read: "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." This was before the fall. It was as early as it could be in the history of the human race, when a single pair were the sole occupants of the earth. Thus was it ordained a perpetual periodical rest, blessed as such and made holy. It was made more than a mere cessation from toil. It was made a holy day; not an idle day, not a holiday nor a play day; but a day when man would be free from work-day labors and cares, and have the privilege of holding closer and more undisturbed communion with his God. It was made to be a day of bodily rest and of spiritual activity—

a sanctified rest. Hence the command: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Although we know not that the law of the Sabbath was ever put into a statutory form until it was embodied in the ten commandments written by the Supreme Lawgiver Himself on Sinai, yet we do know that it was recognized as a divine law before that time. When the manna began to fall around the camp of Israel the Sabbath was an existing institution, observed by both the Giver and the recipients of that miraculous supply of food, and is spoken of in the easy terms in which men speak of something with which they are quite familiar. A double supply came down on the sixth morning of the week; none on the seventh. This was before the decalogue was given. From this we see that the observance of the Sabbath was a well-established usage before the fourth commandment had ever sounded in human ears.

Its place in the law is very significant. When it shall be a matter of indifference how many gods we worship; when we may without sin make to ourselves graven images and fall down and worship them; when we may take the name of the Lord our God in vain without incurring guilt; when we may without blame treat our parents with contempt and neglect; when we may slay our fellow-man, or steal what belongs to him, or indulge in all impurity of heart and life, or bear false witness against our neighbor, or covet with an evil and selfish covetousness that which is his, then, and not before, may we with impunity cease to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; for God has joined all these

laws together in one irrevocable code; and what He has put together let not man put asunder. All the ten commandments were made for man and for his good, and are of perpetual obligation. Jesus Himself tells us that the Sabbath was made for man; how then dare we tear it out of its place in the decalogue, and assign to it a place among the ceremonial laws of the Mosaic economy?

That the Sabbath was made for man is a truth which requires no further argument to prove than the date of its ordination. It was not in the days of Moses, nor of Jacob, nor of Abraham, nor of Noah, but was probably on the first day of the first man. It was when "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." It was a natural law, a universal law, a provision made for man's benefit, one which his constitution both physical and moral required—a periodical rest, a sanctified or holy rest, a division of time which gave six days to the labors of earth and one to the rest and enjoyment of heaven. It is an ordination which all men need, as much to-day as in the years before the flood, one which serves as a link to bind man to his God, as well as to relieve his physical nature from the pressure of perpetual toil. It supplies at once a natural and a religious want; and being fixed at specified intervals of labor and rest, it naturally leads to social convocations for worship. All work at once; all rest at once; and being sanctified by God Himself, it necessarily, when properly observed, becomes a day of sacred rest.

In the history of Noah, while he was shut up in the ark, we see that he was in the habit of dividing time into periods of seven days, which shows that

he remembered the Sabbath day and doubtless kept it holy. The opening clause of the fourth commandment is an injunction to keep in remembrance the then ancient usage of the Sabbath. It was not a new commandment; nor was there one in the entire decalogue which could be regarded as new, although they had not until then been embodied in a written statute. All good men from Adam to Moses regulated their lives by the same principles which are found in the ten commandments, just as good men of the present day do. Those principles are as unalterable as their Author and as are the laws of the universe. All of them were made for the benefit of man as well as for the glory of God; and as well may we try to weaken the force of any of the other nine as of the fourth. To do so is to rob man of one of the blessings and benefits which God has given him.

But for the Sabbath to be what the Divine Lawgiver designed it to be, it must be, as the prophet expresses it, "a delight, honorable." It must not be as a gloomy cell in which a slave is shut up when he is not at work. The Pharisees insisted upon a slavish observance; Jesus, by His example, showed how His freemen should observe it, by making it a day of holy activity in doing good to the souls and bodies of men, thus glorifying their Father in heaven, and enjoying Him—using it, in short, as something which was made for their highest good.

MARTHA AND MARY.

NOT one of all the sacred writers equals Luke as a word-painter. Take, for example, the account he gives us of that dinner party in the house of a Pharisee named Simon, where Jesus was an invited guest, and where a woman—a fallen woman, a sinner, as Simon called her, but now deeply penitent and grateful—entered with a box of precious ointment, silently knelt at His feet, which in the recumbent posture customary at meals in those days, were easily approachable, washed the dust off them with a flood of tears, then anointed them with the ointment, and then received from her Lord gracious words of pardon and commendation. The scene is depicted in such graphic colors that we can see it all in the mere reading of the simple narrative. By a wretched blunder of dull theologians long ago—perhaps in the dark ages—this penitent woman and Mary Magdalene were made identical, and that notion has come down even to the present day. In the Bible now lying before me, in the summary heading of that chapter (the seventh) the name of Mary Magdalene is introduced, although from beginning to end of the inspired text there is not the most remote allusion to that noble and distinguished friend of our Lord. Thus has her unspotted reputation rested for centuries under the stigma of having been a fallen woman in her earlier life.

As another example of Luke's word-painting, take his brief mention of the raising of the son of the widow of Nain. Short and simple as it is, the scene is vividly brought before the attentive reader; and in all literature, sacred or profane, nothing more graphic, pathetic, and touching can be found.

But Luke gives us yet another scene at the close of his tenth chapter, upon which I propose to dwell a little more at length, and then pass on to another scene in the same household which John gives us in his peculiar and inimitable style. Luke says:

"Now it came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him and said, Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her!"

How vividly, and in what strong contrast, are the characters of these two excellent women set before us in this short passage! The one was generous, active, energetic, and careful—anxious to prepare for her honored guest the very best in her power; the other was thoughtful, contemplative, devout, and eager to catch every word that fell from the lips of Him whom she adored as her Lord and Master. Yet they were both good women, both were warm friends and disciples of Jesus. John, in words of touching simplicity tells us that "Jesus loved Mar

tha, and her sister, and Lazarus." This is enough. It is not for us to sit in judgment upon them and say that Mary was better than her sister. But we can easily perceive that they were Christians of different types. The rugged oak and the wide-spreading elm are just as truly things to be admired as are the rose, the hyacinth, or the lily. So such strong, rugged, and energetic characters as Martha are as much to be admired, and are perhaps quite as useful in the family, the church, and the world, as are the less rugged but more beautiful characters, such as Mary was.

In this brief narrative we get a glimpse of the more private life of our Lord. With that humble household in Bethany He had one of His homes, His resting-places; for He Himself had not where to lay His head. Often, doubtless, after His labors in the temple and other public places all day, teaching and healing, He would walk out to that house in Bethany and there find that peace and rest which He so much needed, and find a little pleasant and congenial company. We are told that He loved every member of that family, which was composed of a brother and two sisters. The parents no doubt were both dead. Let us not imagine that this interesting family were abjectly poor; neither were they wealthy, otherwise Martha would not have been so worried because Mary neglected to assist her in the kitchen. Very likely the two did all their own work. What business Lazarus followed, we are not informed.

At one time, when crossing the sea of Galilee in a fishing-boat, Jesus lay down and slept; but when

He went to that home of His in Bethany, He did not lie down and sleep, but conversed freely; and from the brief records which we have of His conversations with His chosen friends and disciples, we may form some impression of the richness of the discourse which so fascinated Mary that she forgot that her sister was serving alone. We have no record, however, of that conversation. Jesus was eminently social. He was no ascetic. Solemn and serious He certainly was; but that seriousness was fascinating and cheering—not in the slightest degree morose—so that we are told that "the common people heard Him gladly." Of Him we may safely say, as Paul said of himself and fellow-laborers, He was "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." Of His pleasant social talk we have an example in Matt. xvii. 25. Peter encountered in Capernaum some collectors of tribute. After telling them that his Master did pay tribute, he went into the house where Jesus was. Knowing what had taken place, Jesus asked him: "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute?" I only cite this to show the easy familiarity which existed between Him and His disciples. I pass over the wonderful miracle by which He procured the money wherewith to pay that tax.

While I think that Mary was somewhat to blame for leaving Martha to serve alone, I am sure that the latter was still more blamable for the exhibition of petulance and ill-temper which she displayed, and still more for the disrespectful words which she addressed to her Lord and Master. In His reply

there is a very kind and gentle rebuke, and at the same time a vindication of Mary's conduct, in which a great saying of universal application is embodied—"One thing is needful." Mary was obeying the great precept: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Mary saw that that was her opportunity, and embraced it. Martha probably would have done better to have sat, as Mary did, at Jesus' feet, and let the supper wait for a little while.

In this short and simple narrative there is an exhaustless mine of practical instruction as to the conduct of the Christian life; for too many of us are like Martha, anxious and troubled about many things to the detriment of our highest well-being—building wood, hay, and stubble, when we ought to be building gold, silver, precious stones—laying up treasures in heaven. Yet Martha was doing what she was fully persuaded was her duty, and in so doing she was prompted by a noble and generous impulse. But it was duty on a lower plane than that which her sister was trying to do.

Some time afterward Lazarus, who was probably the mainstay of this family, fell sick, very sick. Jesus was away beyond Jordan at the time. The sisters sent a message to Him which, for faith, tenderness, and pathos stands unparalleled—"Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." This shows us how Jesus esteemed Lazarus; and no higher encomium could have been uttered. It shows us, moreover, the confidence which these sisters had in the kindness of their well-known friend and frequent guest; for they made no request. The mere

knowledge that Lazarus was sick, they fondly hoped, would be sure to bring Him to them with all possible speed. They knew that He had healed many sick ones, and surely He will heal Lazarus, His beloved friend Lazarus, the moment He arrives. But it pleased their Divine Friend to put their faith to a severe test. Jesus did not come for several days; meanwhile Lazarus grew worse and worse until he died. Still Jesus did not come. They buried him, and after he had lain in the tomb four days, their anxiously expected Friend came. Martha, more alert than her sister, was the first to learn of His approach, and hastened out to meet Him. Was there a shade of complaint and chiding in her first exclamation: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died"? I think there was—and I think so because of the grand and sublime response of the Saviour to her words—a response so well known that I need not rehearse His words here. Her grief, deep and sincere as it was, did not excite His sensibility or stir His emotions so as to disturb His sublime calmness. But when Mary came she fell down at His feet in overwhelming sorrow, uttering the same words that her sister had used. But mark the difference in the effect of the words—words which the sisters had probably uttered many times between themselves since their brother's death. Her anguish and tears, and her uncomplaining devotion evinced by her falling down at His feet in meek submission, were too much even for Him. For once He seems to have been overcome; for He groaned in the spirit, was troubled and wept. We can not understand how One, clothed

with almighty power, and who knew that in a few minutes He would send a flood of joy into the hearts of these afflicted sisters, and have His friend Lazarus, whom He loved, standing by Him in life and health, could have been so overcome. But it is a part of "the old, old story of Jesus and His love," which all genuine believers know to be true, and which, old as it is, is still and ever will be fresh.

"TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU."

THE word yoke as here used is the emblem or badge of servitude. It is not a synonym of cross, but of cheerful, voluntary service. It is well before we discuss the subject to quote the compact cluster of gracious sayings with which the words set at the head of this article stand connected, as found in the last three verses of the eleventh chapter of Matthew: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Every human being who is capable of action at all wears a yoke of servitude of some kind. Not one is free. Every yoke is heavy, galling, and frets the wearer except that of Christ. It only is light, easy, and gives rest and peace to the wearer. All other yokes set the wearers in quest of rest, but none is found. A thousand things promise satisfaction, and are eagerly pursued; but they always disappoint their devotees where they are sought as the chief good. They may all be good in their proper places: but when they are lifted up so as to become the chief end of life they cease to be good; they are no longer satisfying; they fail to give rest. Wealth is good in itself; but the man who suffers its acqui-

sition to become his chief object of pursuit becomes a slave, and he takes upon him a yoke which becomes heavier and heavier as long as he lives. Success may inflate his pride, as it does in many cases; or it may shrivel up his heart until there is no room in it for a generous emotion or a noble aspiration. He blocks his way to the kingdom of heaven, so that Christ Himself said that it is hard, almost impossible, for him to enter. Weary and heavy laden he goes through life, and then goes down to darkness and death, leaving behind him all upon which his heart and hopes had been fixed. This is one of the most alluring, one of the most plausible, and yet one of the most galling of the yokes that sin ever imposed upon the neck of man.

Ambition is perhaps a nobler yoke than covetousness, but it is more feverish, more galling, more destructive of rest than the other. More of the pride of the human heart clusters around it, making it a consuming fire which nothing can satisfy. When kept in its proper place, in subordination to the law of Christ, ambition is a noble attribute of humanity; but when it is suffered to centre on self and self-aggrandizement it is as mean and grovelling a passion as covetousness, and is a heavy and oppressive burden. The love of pleasure and excitement is proof that those who seek such things are weary and heavy laden, poor and hungry, restless and uneasy, destitute in themselves of the elements of rest and satisfaction and joy. They are in the condition of the prodigal who would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat—food which was unfit for him, and which could

afford him no nourishment. See that crowd of eager people pressing into the theatre, the opera, or the ball-room. Why are they there? They are weary and heavy laden, and are seeking rest. They are trying to block up the current of their own thoughts, so that they may be relieved for a moment from that restlessness and torment which hearts separated from the only true source of joy always feel. They are like Dives begging for a drop of water to cool his tongue. They are seeking rest where it is not to be found. What they do find is not rest, but only forgetfulness. The same absence of rest which impels the votaries of what is called pleasure to such places drives them to the perusal, or, rather, the greedy devouring of exciting novels, the writing and publishing of which has become a great and lucrative business. It is a sad verification of the words of Him who is the life of the world where He says: "If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered." It is to such poor, thoughtless, withered ones that He extends the invitation, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls."

The man who really and heartily takes Christ's yoke upon him, and serves Him with an undivided heart, has an inexhaustible source of joy which lifts him above the need of all these lower things. The blessing of his God upon his labors may result in wealth; but still his better treasure will be in heaven; so that although riches increase, his heart will not be set upon them. Should his ambition

be gratified by being lifted to high places, he will be thankful, and yet feel more deeply his responsibility. The praise of God will influence him and give him joy more than the praise of men; and he will say with Joseph, "God hath made me what I am." Should the pleasures of social life surround him he will enjoy them with a relish unknown to the mere devotee of pleasure, because these things will be added to the peace which flows like a river of life in his heart. He will laugh as heartily as anybody when an occasion to do so arises; but he will never run after the things that are got up for that purpose; for good as laughter is in its proper place, there is very little true joy in it. Pleasant and lively social intercourse with his fellows he can enter into with all his heart; but it will be tempered with that charity which is kind, which is like the great Exemplar, meek and lowly, and which esteems others better than himself. This spirit of Christ will drive from the heart of woman that vain and low ambition which makes her strive to outdo her neighbor in dress and ornaments; but she will exhibit that charity "which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly"; yet in that very way she will excite both admiration and love. Oh! Christian woman, this yoke which your Saviour exhorts you to take and wear is the grandest ornament which God ever made, and in His sight it is "of great price." It is very beautiful here; it will be still more beautiful over there; for you will carry it with you.

FEEDING THE MULTITUDE.

"THE common people heard Him gladly," Mark tells us; and Luke speaks of an innumerable multitude being gathered together on one occasion to hear Jesus. When He closed His wonderful discourse commonly called the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew tells us that "the people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

But on no occasion was this eagerness of the people to hear Him more signally manifested than that mentioned by Matthew in his fourteenth chapter and by Mark and John. After giving an account of the murder of John the Baptist by Herod, he says, "And his (John's) disciples came and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus." The inimitable pathos of these few words is found in their extreme simplicity—"went and told Jesus." We are not told in express terms how Jesus was affected by the sad news—if to Him who knew all things anything could be news; but that He was deeply affected by what had happened to His heroic friend and forerunner, and that He tenderly sympathized in the sorrows of these afflicted men, we may be very sure by what is stated in the next verse: "When Jesus heard of it He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart." He had

a desire to find a place in which to mourn. But this was denied Him, for "when the people had heard thereof they followed Him on foot out of the cities. . . . . And He healed their sick."

All day they crowded around Him listening to His teachings and intensely interested in the miracles of healing which they witnessed. "And when the day was now far spent (as Mark tells us), His disciples came unto Him and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed; send them away that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread, for they have nothing to eat." Let us pause here for a moment to think of the meekness and kindness of the Master in permitting these disciples, without taking the slightest offence, to suggest to Him what He ought to do. Viewing things from their stand-point, however, they were right. Kindness and common prudence dictated what they said; but their words have more the ring of an order than a suggestion, and from them we are able to judge of the freedom of the social intercourse that existed between Jesus and His disciples.

Matthew says, "Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat." Mark tells us, "They say unto Him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat? (About $30 in our money.) And He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? Go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes." Here we have more of that free and easy social life that prevailed in that family of which our Lord was the head. Although immeasurably

above any who ever bore the form of humanity, He admits His chosen ones to the position, not of servants, but of friends and companions, and lives with them on terms of the most familiar intercourse. May we entertain the hope that in heaven He will be equally companionable with those whom He has redeemed, and whose robes are washed white in His blood? I think so; for of that higher and better life we read, "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." This seems to imply close, intimate, familiar companionship. Moreover, we read that He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.

The disciples informed their Master what provision they had, with the remark (as John tells in relating the same incident), "What are these among so many?" From a merely human point of view their remark was correct; for really had the supply not been miraculously multiplied ten men could probably have eaten the whole of it. Without any regard to the supposed inadequacy of the supply, Jesus said, "Bring them hither to me." Then He commanded them to make the men sit down on the grass, for there was much grass in the place. This would occupy some time. All was done decently and in order. Then, looking up to heaven, "He blessed and break, and gave the loaves to His disciples," says Matthew, "and the disciples to the multitude"; Mark adds, "and the two fishes divided He among them all." The most that He could give to any one disciple would be half a loaf, while some would carry to his work of distribution a still

smaller supply. But instead of the supply which the Master had put into each man's hand diminishing as He broke it off for the people, he would soon see that it was growing larger and larger, enabling him as he went along the ranks to break off more and more generously, until every one had abundance—more than he could eat; for we next read that when, at the command of the Master, they gathered up the fragments that were left they filled twelve baskets. Very likely the loaves and fishes which Jesus blessed, and for which He gave thanks, would not have half filled one basket.

In this notable miracle—and there was another like it—all the human agency possible was pressed into the service. Jesus did not create this food out of nothing, but called for the little that existed at the time and place. The loaves were barley loaves, and the fragments which were gathered up, as well as all the bread that was eaten, were barley bread, and the same was true in the case of the fishes. Both were multiplied immensely; but how, no man, not even the disciples who distributed them, could perceive. This multiplication was equivalent to creation; but there was a hiding of the divine power under the little basis which human agency had furnished. Many in those ranks would not know that there was any miracle about it. They ate and were filled, and there was an abundance left over. They knew that the disciples of Him whose footsteps they had been following gave it to them, and to them they would feel grateful. But afterward they discovered that they had been miraculously supplied, and exclaimed, as John tells us, "This is

of a truth that prophet that should come into the world!" Then the prevailing sentiment among them became political rather than religious; for they thought of taking Him by force and making Him a king. A king who could supply his people in that way would be all that selfish humanity could desire.

Having fed the people, so that they should not faint on their way to their homes, He sent them away. Then He sent His disciples across the Sea of Galilee in their boat. He then, alone, "departed into a mountain to pray," as Mark tells us. He yearned for solitude, for His heart was sad about the death of His earliest and most intrepid friend, John the Baptist; while His own still more awful fate rose like a thick cloud before Him. We are warranted in saying this; for He exclaimed on another occasion: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He needed to pray; for strong as He was, He sometimes shuddered at the prospect of what He had to endure when God should make His soul an offering for sin. The night was stormy; and when He had gathered strength through communing with His Father, He went to seek His poor disciples who were tossing almost helplessly on the lake in the teeth of an adverse wind. He needed no boat, for He walked to them on the water. I shall not dwell upon that interesting incident; for all Christian readers ought to be familiar with it.

STILLING THE TEMPEST.

JESUS had been engaged all day teaching the multitudes who gathered around Him on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. The common people, we are told, heard Him gladly, even though few of them were able to understand clearly the import of the deep and beautiful parables which it pleased Him that day to pour forth.

But, divine as He was, He was subject to all the weaknesses of our common humanity, and such a day of labor would cause weariness and exhaustion just as it would in any other man. When He finished the work of the day and dismissed the people, He said to His disciples, "Let us pass over unto the other side,"—the other side of the lake, to the country of the Gadarenes. He knew why He was going there, although it is not probable that His disciples were made acquainted with His object. His eye saw the poor raving maniac among the tombs, and His mercy prompted Him to go and deliver him from the legion of demons who had him in possession. The distance over which the disciples had to row their fishing-boat from the one point to the other was probably seven or eight miles. Some other little boats went along, so eager were the people to be near Him.

Here was an opportunity to get about two or three hours of rest after the fatiguing labor of the day, and Jesus availed Himself of it by retiring to

the hinder part of the vessel, where He lay down with His head upon a pillow and slept. Satan and his evil spirits were hovering around as usual, and seeing the Lord asleep in that little frail craft far from land, conceived that it would be an admirable opportunity to drown Him, provided he could get up a tornado. Paul (Eph. ii. 2) calls Satan "the prince of the power of the air," from which we may infer that he is sometimes permitted to do such things. He tried it on that occasion, and was successful in getting up a terrible tempest, and (as Mark tells us) "the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full." But Jesus slept on—

> "Amid the tempest dark and wild
> He slumbered like a weary child."

The terrified and helpless mariners thought this very strange. They ran to Him, and in words which bear a tinge of reproach, they cried, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" In calm, unexcited majesty He arose, glanced for a moment at the raging elements as a brave man would glance at an angry cur, and only said in a tone of infinite sovereignty, "Peace! Be still!" In a moment the wind ceased and there was a great calm—wind and water both became alike quiet. Then He turned to the affrighted and astonished men and said, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?"

Reflections upon this wonderful incident might be carried out in many lines; but I propose to regard it from a point of view which may be new to some minds. While it is, as it stands upon the sacred page, a short and well-told narrative of a historical

fact which happened more than eighteen centuries ago, we may find in it a grand allegorical prophecy of what will occur on a far wider scale probably not many years hence. Jesus Himself tells us of a coming storm, a time of trouble such as the world never saw; and in Rev. xii. 12, we read (I quote the revised version), "Woe for the earth and for the sea; because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." He will come down just as he came down on the Galilean lake long ago while Jesus slept. Then will the world be tossed and torn as that lake was; the faith of Christians will well-nigh expire, as did that of the disciples in that storm of which we have been speaking; and then will the same great Deliverer rebuke and still that tempest with as much ease as He did that uproar on that little sea.

The unexampled rapidity with which things both good and evil—are going on in the world; the audacity of proud and lofty wicked men in assailing the very throne of the Almighty, seeking to drown Him in a sea of scientific theories and speculations, as the devil tried to drown Him in that lake; and the fierce and dangerous combinations of men of baser type, such as the Nihilists of Russia, the Communists of Germany and France, the Land-leaguers of Ireland, and similar combinations in our own country, all give warning that we are approaching some great and terrible crisis. But when these things begin to come to pass, and when we see these things, and things still more alarming than anything that we yet see, and which human power is unable to control, shall we be terrified as

were the men on that little fishing-boat? We ought not to be, for Jesus, in words as cheering as any He ever uttered, says: "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." With all the ease with which He stilled the tempest of old He will say to the coming world-wide storm, "Peace! Be still!" and then there will be a great calm—a reign of righteousness; "and the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever" (Isaiah xxxii. 17).

MANY FOLDS—ONE FLOCK.

THE change of a single word, the correction of a mistake in the translation of one of the great sayings of Jesus, even though it amounts only to the substitution of a single monosyllable for another of similar import, sometimes sheds a flood of light upon a passage which, although the change is hardly noticed at first, grows brighter and brighter the more closely we consider it.

In the old or authorized version the 16th verse of John x. reads thus: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

The verse in the revised translation reads thus: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd."

In the Greek there are two words, both of which are rendered fold in the old translation. The first is correctly rendered fold; but the second, which is also rendered fold, is a word of a different meaning, broader and more comprehensive. In the revised edition the second word is translated flock. In the margin it reads, "There shall be one flock, one Shepherd." Thus changing but a single word.

In the word correctly translated fold it is plain that the Saviour was speaking of the Jews. Even Peter, in the house of Cornelius, was astonished to see those "other sheep" coming in; for even he, up to that time, seems to have thought that salvation was confined to that people; and when he returned to Jerusalem they of the circumcision accused him and blamed him for going in to the Gentiles. But Peter's narrative of what had transpired in the house of Cornelius quickly cured his Jewish brethren of their restricted notions; for we are told that "when they heard these things they held their peace and glorified God." So Cornelius was brought into the flock. But he never entered the Jewish fold.

When Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans he addressed one fold; the two to the Corinthians were addressed to another fold, and so of all the rest. Each division constituted a distinct fold, but all were parts of the same flock and had the same Shepherd—divided, not in faith, but only in location. And the same is true of the seven distinct messages which John in Patmos was commanded to send from the one Shepherd to the seven churches of Asia. Each was a separate fold of the same flock.

From the clear and strong distinction which the new and doubtless more correct rendering of this important verse makes between the words fold and flock, we see, as we never saw before, the beautiful unity in diversity which is found in the kingdom of heaven as it exists in this world. That kingdom here on earth is necessarily made up of elements

more or less imperfect; and being so, diversity is inevitable. While the members are one in Christ, their inherent imperfections cause them to differ one from another, as is found to be the case at the present day. For centuries, during the dark mediæval period, all the power of sacerdotal domination was put forth to shut up all Christ's sheep into one fold. In that fold, all freedom and nearly all life were thus smothered out. When the Great Reformation came the barriers were broken down and Christ's people became free. But this freedom, instead of causing these liberated sheep to gather into a single fold—which they would have done had they been perfect—resulted in the organization of numerous sects, each of which became a separate fold. Still there was only one flock, one Shepherd, so far as the members of these several folds were Christ's sheep.

"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis," said the Good Shepherd in His kind but severe message to that decaying fold; and so doubtless He could say of every association on earth that bears His name, even of that huge and pent-up fold from which so many broke away in the days of the Reformation. Let us, therefore, be glad that Christ's flock embraces all the faithful of all the folds, and that we can hail them as brethren, however widely they may differ from us in non-essentials. We are all struggling to rise from darkness to light; all pleasing ourselves with the notion that we have got nearer to the truth than our brethren of other folds; and the less we contend about the things whereon we differ, and the nearer we get to the

Shepherd, the more we shall feel and know that there is after all but one flock. While we are far from Him those minor differences which separate us one from another assume vast importance in our esteem; but when His countenance shines upon us, and His Spirit animates us, they shrink almost to nothing.

From the great diversity of human character, and from the darkness and imperfection in which we are yet involved, it is better that there should be numerous folds. Men can not avoid having divers systems of doctrine and prescribed forms so long as they are what they are; but as light shines more and more upon them, the less important do these systems and forms become, and the more do the diversities of the folds disappear in the glories of the one flock and the one Shepherd.

The folds—the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Episcopalian, the Baptist, the Lutheran, the Congregational, the Friends, and even the Catholic—may and ought to be pleasant homes and resting-places where brethren may dwell together in unity. But it is bad to make them prison-houses where the dwellers in them are deprived of that liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free. This was the great blunder and crime of the Church of Rome. Therefore, while dwelling in their respective folds, let the sheep ever keep in mind that they belong to one great flock, of which each chosen fold is but a part, and that they all have one great and glorious Shepherd who will take them in His own good time out of their several folds and lead them as one flock to the place which He has prepared for them, whence

they shall never more go out—where "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Or, as it reads in the revised version, including the preceding verse: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev. vii. 16, 17).

"CONTINUE YE IN MY LOVE."

"And he showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."—REV. xxii. 1.

E are apt to fix the mind altogether on heaven when we read these words. But, while the metaphor is applicable to that better country, we err when we restrict that river of life to the abode of the blessed. Like Him from whose throne it proceeds, it is infinite—it has no limitations, no end. When the Son of God came down to give life to the world, that river reached the earth in a volume that passeth knowledge. God's gift of His Son is His unspeakable gift, so great that it is impossible that it could be greater; and this He gave because He "so loved the world." This love is what the angel showed John when he caused him to see that river.

The water of life, clear as crystal, is God's love. Angels are made glad by it. Christ is glorified by it; for upon Him it centres, and through Him it flows to all who are united to Him by faith. Through Christ they become a peculiar people—different from the loftier beings of heaven, and different from the lower creatures of earth. Out of Christ men are lost and undone—lower than the brutes, for brutes are incapable of sin, and can not fall below the condition in which their Maker placed them. In Christ they are higher than the angels;

for, being in Christ, they are made partakers of the divine nature, and through that union become the sons of God (2 Peter i. 4; John i. 12). It is wonderful. John, in his first epistle, says—and he can say no more, he can go no higher—"Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be"; then he adds, "but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him."

That river of life and love bore Christ to us in all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Indeed, to us He Himself is that river. Through no other channel could God's love flow to us. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you," says Christ; and then He says, "Continue ye in my love." Ponder every word, every clause of this wonderful utterance. How does Christ love us? "As the Father hath loved me." The love of the Father for Him is infinite and unchangeable, unabating and endless. Nothing can separate the believer from it. The believer may and does change; Christ changes not. The believer may grow cold, and wander off like a lost sheep; but that coldness, that wandering, can not separate him from the love and care of his Shepherd. He will surely follow him and bring him back, restore him and cause him to walk in the paths of righteousness. Hence, he is able to sing:

> "My soul He doth restore again,
> And me to walk doth make
> Within the paths of righteousness,
> Even for His own name's sake."

When He says, "Continue ye in my love," He does not mean that we must keep our hearts always

in a glow of love to Him, but He is exhorting us to assure ourselves that however our love may have chilled, however hard our hearts may have become, however far we may have wandered from the path which He has marked out for us, His love to us has not abated in the least. This truth Peter found out on the night on which he denied Him; for that look which Jesus gave him brought him back and caused him to weep bitterly, because he saw that his Master still loved him as ardently as ever. The wretched Judas got no such look as that. The one continued in Christ's love; the other never knew it.

The river of the water of life which flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb can only reach us through our union with the great Mediator, through faith in Him. On His love to us, not ours to Him, must we rest our hope; His truth, and not our own fidelity, must be the bond of our union, the ground of our confidence. But first let us be well assured that we are not of the number of those to whom He will say, in the day of judgment: "I never knew you." Of this we can be well assured, partly by the memory of past experience, and partly by numerous good tests laid down in the Scriptures. Take this one for example: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." This grace is retained in the heart of every true believer, notwithstanding God may have hid His face from him for the moment.

In this we see the course of the river of life, as it flows from the throne of God to His incarnate Son, and through Him to all whom the Father hath

given Him. From them it flows back to its source, and onward to their brethren in Christ, and to all their natural brethren in the great family of Adam. This blessed stream which issues from the throne of God and the Lamb carries the missionary of the Cross to the dark places of the earth, and to the equally dark and still more wicked places found in Christian lands.

Of the flow of this river to other realms of creation (for God's tender mercies are over all His works), it is not for us to understand; but the part which does belong to us as ransomed sinners is glorious beyond all expression: "Behold," exclaims the beloved disciple in his first epistle, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" Of the nature and measure of that love Jesus tells us in terms as simple as it is possible for Him to use, yet is their import as far beyond our grasp as are the eternal years of God, or the infinite space into which we look when we gaze at the stars. He says: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you"; and it is in this love of Him to us, not ours to Him, that He exhorts us to continue.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

PAUL, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, speaks of the love of Christ as a thing which passeth knowledge; and yet he prays that they may know it. It is well, therefore, to turn our thoughts to this infinite theme, and begin, even here in this lower life, the study of that which will never, never be fully comprehended.

It is Christ's love to us, not ours to Him, of which we are speaking. Many Christians worry themselves over the question whether they love Christ, and ask with painful doubt and uncertainty:

> "Do I love the Lord, or no?
> Am I His, or am I not?"

Such anxiety as this is all wrong. The beloved disciple had no trouble of that kind when he wrote: "We love Him because He first loved us." Again he says: "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." It was this knowledge that kept the heart of John so aglow with love for his Lord that it scintillates beautifully in almost every sentence that he wrote. He had heard his Lord and Master, in that last sorrowful night that he spent with Him and His companions, solemnly enjoin upon them to "continue in His love"; and well did he obey the injunction. Therefore we only find in his subsequent life and writings the reflection of

the infinite love of God as it shone in the face of Jesus Christ. It shined in that highly favored and beloved man as the light of the sun in a dew-drop which hangs upon a blade of grass, or in the disk of a planet, which, but for it, would be dark, cold, dead, and undiscoverable.

Jesus did not say, "Continue to love me." As well might the sun say to the dark planets around him, "Send your rays of light to me, and then I will shine on you." They have none to send; neither have we poor sinners any to send to our Sun of Righteousness. But when He shines upon us we can reflect back some of His light—only a little, to be sure—but that little is beautiful. He is pleased with it, and all who see it admire it as they admire the bright reflection of the natural sun, whether seen in the brilliant face of a planet, or in a drop of dew.

"Continue ye in my love," says Jesus. Let no clouds of unbelief, or distrust, or passion, or worldliness, or sinful desires or practices thrust themselves in between Christ and you, to intercept those life-giving rays which flow from Him, as light and warmth and life flow from the great centre of this system in which our Creator has placed us. As well might we expect a flower to bloom or a fruit to mature, if planted in a dark cavern, as look for Christian graces to flourish in the absence of a realizing sense of the love of Christ to us individually. The fact that the sun is shining over the whole face of the earth has no influence upon that supposed flower or fruit in the cavern. It must, for itself, be set in sunshine. So must every individual

mortal be brought into that true light if he would grow up into everlasting life. "Abide in me," "Continue ye in my love," says Christ; "for without me ye can do nothing."

The Bible speaks of "sparks of our own kindling." This is a striking figure to set forth the painful, anxious, but unavailing efforts of many to work themselves up into a love for Christ. That is what we can not do. Nothing short of a persuasion—not merely a persuasion of the understanding, but a persuasion that is felt deep down in the heart and lays hold of the affections—that Christ loves us can enable us to return, to reflect back, that love. We love Him because we know that He loves us, and gave Himself for us.

Jesus says, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The word draw, as it is here used, is an attracting force, not one which can not be resisted; for it is often successfully resisted; and we should cease to be free agents if it could not be. Jesus complains, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Thus we see that there are two wills, the divine and the human. The Eternal God asks in earnest expostulation, "Why will ye die?" Jesus cries, "Come unto me." Everything, indeed, that infinite love can do to save sinners has been done; but the natural will of man resists. In some that resistance is overcome, in others it is not. The love of the world, its pleasures, its profits, its ten thousand allurements, are too strong to be overcome. All that is said in the Holy Scriptures of God's desire to save sinners, all that is said of the love of Jesus, may be admitted

as abstract truth, but yet it is not really believed. Thousands are saying in a half-hearted way, "Oh! I should like to be a Christian!" or "I wish I was good enough; but I am not," or "I hope to be one before I die." Some go so far as to say, "I am trying to do right, and I hope that I shall be saved." In all such thoughts or talk as this the love of Christ, and His power to save to the uttermost, are utterly excluded. These are some of the sparks of which the prophet speaks, and declares that all who build their hopes upon them shall lie down in sorrow.

Jesus says, "Continue ye in my love." If we do that He will take care of our love, and we shall not be asking, "Do I love the Lord or no?" While standing in the cheering, life-giving beams of the Sun of Righteousness, no matter how weak and vacillating we may feel ourselves to be, we can sing in the exulting words of Horatius Bonar:

> "I change—He changes not;
> The Christ can never die;
> His love, not mine, the resting place;
> His truth, not mine, the tie."
>
> —*Pres. Hymnal*, 268.

Or adopt as our own the still sublimer words of Paul: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim. i. 12).

JESUS GIVING JOY AND PEACE.

WHEN Jesus had come to the last night of His mortal life, and the awful shadows of Gethsemane and Calvary were already upon Him, He talked for a good while calmly, lovingly, and cheerfully to His little band of chosen witnesses, who were deeply depressed because they knew that something terrible was impending. Just as they were entering the passover room He said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." These portentous words filled them with the deepest sorrow and foreboding. To their minds the words were dark, mysterious, and dreadful, and their sorrow deeply excited the sympathy of their Master. After telling Peter that on that night he would thrice deny Him, He at once began the most cheering, the most loving, the most triumphant discourse that ever fell on human ears, lifting them away up above the gloom of that dark hour. It was not a set address, but a conversation which shows us, as nothing else can show, the loving and familiar relation which existed between Jesus and His disciples.

How grandly He begins! "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." He then lifts them up to that glorious place which He was about to prepare for them, promising to receive them unto Himself, that where He is they should be also. He had just told them once more

that He was about to suffer; but this last promise assured them that although He was about to suffer and to die, yet they should not lose Him. And so He went on pouring forth promise after promise, exacting nothing on their part but faith in Him, and love to Him and to one another. Not a word is said about their sins; not the semblance of a rebuke; not the slightest allusion to the fearful conflict into which He should enter before the sun should again rise upon the earth. Nothing is said from first to last but what is consolatory, triumphant, assuring, and joyful. Now let us quote His concluding words: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

In this last quotation I have followed the revised version. The old or received version reads, "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation." I prefer the revised reading, because it connects the last sentence so strikingly with the words, "in me ye might have peace." There is no other source of peace but Jesus. Those who seek for peace in the world, no matter what their outward circumstances may be, have tribulation. They may have what people call enjoyment, but not peace.

It was right that the hearts of these disciples should be sorrowful "on that dark, that doleful night." This Jesus did not forbid; but He did tell them not to let their hearts be troubled. There is a difference between sorrow and trouble. Sorrow may be and often is one of the holiest of emotions. Jesus Himself was a man of sorrow. Tribu-

lation and trouble are terms that express almost the same thing. The idea is trembling, shaking, doubt, foreboding, uncertainty, and has in it more or less of the element of unbelief. Sorrow, on the other hand, may coexist with the clearest and strongest faith, and also sometimes with a high degree of peace and joy. To avoid trouble under the pressure of grief Jesus simply said, "Ye believe in God; believe also in me." There was no difficulty in the minds of these men as to the existence, power, and faithfulness of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of the holy prophets; but to believe in, to trust in, and to rely upon One who seemed to be as weak as themselves, One who was about to suffer, One who at that hour seemed to be unable to save Himself, was a severe trial of their faith. Hence the grand utterance regarding those many mansions in His Father's house, and the still grander promise that He would go and prepare a place for them, and then come again and receive them to Himself, so that where He was they should be also. Although they were unable to see through the dark and impenetrable cloud that then hung over them and caused their hearts to tremble with dread and apprehension, He lifted them up above it, and revealed to them the glory which should be His and theirs together forever.

But His gracious words did not terminate upon that little band who at that moment were gathered around Him. They are just as much for you, dear reader, and for me, as they were for them. They were in tribulation at that time; so are we very

often. Their hearts were troubled because they saw that some awful calamity was impending Their experience was that of their brethren of all ages. It was a dark and terrible cloud that had gathered over them which they could not understand. Such clouds—not so terrible it may be, but yet dark and mysterious—often gather over us. Jesus often says to us in His dealings with us, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

"Sorrow hath filled your hearts," said Jesus on that same occasion; but He did not blame them for that nor forbid it; but He did say, "Let not your heart be troubled." Faith, and love, and joy, and peace may all exist in the heart of a Christian together with deep sorrow; but they can not exist in a troubled heart, in a heart filled with doubt, mistrust, apprehension, despondency, hopelessness, all of which are the progeny of unbelief. Paul speaks of being "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," the very condition into which our Lord labored to bring His disciples on that night on which He was betrayed. He speaks also of being joyful in tribulation, that is, in the midst of surrounding storms of persecution or other outward trial. Solomon tells us that "sorrow is better than laughter"; and that the house of mourning is better than that of feasting.

Sorrow does not destroy peace, but is rather conducive to it, because it makes the heart more tender and brings us nearer to God. That is a very good petition with which one of our most beautiful hymns begins:

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee;
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me!"

The nearer we are to God, the more peace we have. Our joy may not be exuberant; our hearts may be in heaviness because of manifold temptations, *i. e.*, trials; but peace is still better than joy. It was not joy, but peace, which Jesus gave to His sorrowing friends and brethren before He left them, in these beautiful and sublime words which are enough to calm a troubled world: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

"LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED."

ITH these kind and beautiful words the Saviour opened His farewell address to His sorrowing disciples just before He suffered, and soon after He had given to them the bread and the wine which He appointed to be the memorial of His death through all time until He came again.

Had He stopped there, in the situation in which those perplexed disciples were at that moment, He would have uttered idle words. But He did not stop there; for He immediately added, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." He Himself had just told them, "One of you shall betray me," and "all ye shall be offended because of me this night." If, therefore, men ever had reason to be troubled, they had at that moment. They were very anxious; yet His cheering words rise above this sea of trouble, and He says, "Let not your heart be troubled," and then pointed them to Almighty God as their Father, and to Himself as their Friend, their Redeemer, their Lord, their Shepherd, and their Brother, as objects in whom they could believe and securely trust. He spake not of His impending death, but only of His departure from them, that He might go and prepare mansions of everlasting rest for them, so that He could return again and take them home to Himself, where they

should dwell forever with Him, see His face, sing His praise, and behold His glory.

Surely those disciples had enough to trouble them. Their Master had told them that He was about to leave them—that one of them, they knew not which, should betray Him—that all of them should be offended because of Him that very night; and, worse than all else, that He Himself should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men to be crucified and slain; and still, under this tremendous storm of outward trouble and self-distrust, which extorted the terrible question, "Lord, is it I?" He calmly and triumphantly exclaims, "Let not your heart be troubled."

It was well for the whole world of penitent sinners that those disciples were subjected to that fearful storm of every disquieting element that can be imagined—outward temptation, certain impending calamity, sore bereavement, coupled with the last degree of self-distrust. Yet in that dark hour Jesus kindly turns to them and says, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." Then, after talking to them of the heavenly mansions, of Himself as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and of the Comforter whom He would send, He uttered this grand benediction, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

If they might be free from trouble in that dark hour; if they might trust so that the peace of which Jesus spoke might flow into their hearts and give them rest and even joy, surely no penitent

sinner need for a moment lie under a load of doubt and anxiety. Only believe in God your Saviour as Jesus bids you, and all is well. He will give the peace of which He speaks. No matter how weak and unreliable you may feel yourself to be; no matter how vile, sinful, and undeserving; no matter how little you may know of the deeper mysteries of grace, you are quite ready to go to Him for life and light and peace and salvation.

Some people have a vague notion that in order to be converted they must have a season of anxiety and trouble, of doubt and disquietude, and then they may dare to hope that, after such a prelude, they will pass into the light and joy of saving faith. This is all wrong. Many, it is true, struggle into life in that way; but it is not the better way; and no one would experience these preliminary troubles at all if they could only let go their self-trust, and rely solely on Christ. This all are obliged to do at last; but it would be much more to the glory of the Saviour if it were done at once. I was very much pleased some years ago to learn that an old friend of mine, a man of fine culture and natural ability, but who had lived well-nigh sixty years in careless disregard of the claims of God upon him, almost in an instant became a firm and happy believer while walking the street alone. The Holy Spirit touched his heart, and he responded at once, just as all ought to do. He lived a few years a devout and happy Christian and then died in triumph.

But let no careless people take comfort from Christ's words. They are not the ones to whom

He is saying, "Let not your heart be troubled"; for it was but a little later on the same night on which He uttered these words, that He said to them, when He saw them sleeping at a time when they ought not to have slept: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." It is to those who are watching and praying; those who are asking the way of salvation; those who are environed with trouble of any kind—struggling with adversity it may be, or doubt, or darkness, or temptation, that His cheering voice comes, saying, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." And at the close of His consolatory address, He says to the same class: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

A LITTLE WHILE.

IN His last conversation with His disciples, just before His betrayal and sufferings, Jesus used this phrase with thrilling effect while speaking of the awful events which lay just before Himself and them (see John xvi. 16, to the end).

But His words on that occasion reached farther than to the men who were present in that upper room, and beyond the terrible events just impending. They come home with cheering power to the heart of every believer who is walking by faith and not by sight through this dark and trying world—this mortal life, which, although it may reach to fourscore years, is only a little while.

Still it is not of that simple and expressive phrase as it occurs in John xvi., that I propose to speak at this time, but of the same phrase as found in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the apostle quotes the Eighth Psalm, wherein David breaks out in an exclamation of wonder, saying: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honor and didst set him over the works of Thy hands; Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet." Here the psalmist is speaking of man in the generic sense.

This quotation is made from the revised version of the New Testament, which is exactly the same as the old; but in the margin the phrase, "a little lower than the angels," is made to read "for a little while lower than the angels." This is a great and startling difference, and warrants the inference that man's rank is only in this mortal life lower than that of angels; that it is not his permanent place. Let us follow the apostle's argument a little farther. I first quote from the authorized version:

"For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Here is the same passage from the revised version:

"For in that He subjected all things unto Him, He left nothing that is not subject to Him. But now we see not yet all things subjected to Him. But we behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels [marginal reading—'made for a little while lower than the angels,'] even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man."

The same words which the psalmist applies to man in the generic sense are used by the apostle of Jesus Himself, who, in the conditions to which He was pleased to subject Himself during His mortal life, was "for a little while" made lower than the angels. In His case the marginal reading

must be the true reading; for we know from His own words that His rank before He became incarnate, as well as since He rose from the tomb, is immeasurably above that of angels. No argument is needed on that point.

Well, then, does it follow that His redeemed people are only "for a little while" lower than the angels? Does Jesus raise them to His own rank? He says: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." To what angel did He at any time say such words as these? "Beloved," says John in his first epistle, "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Or, as it reads in the revised version, "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be." This, too, favors the idea that the lower condition of which both the psalmist and the apostle speak is only "for a little while."

But let us return to the grand argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons into glory, to make the author (or captain) of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." "He is not ashamed to call them brethren!" How wondrous the grace that fits such beings as we are for such a relation! Of angels it is written that they excel in strength; that they are pure and

holy. One of them said, "I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God." They are, therefore, great and glorious beyond anything that we can yet conceive; but yet they rank no higher than servants, ministering spirits; while those whom Christ purchased with His blood, and lifted out of a horrible pit and out of miry clay, are called the children of God, the joint heirs with Christ, and are even made, as Peter says, partakers of the divine nature. They are made "for a little while," and only for a little while, lower than the angels. He who is mighty to save and equally mighty to exalt, finds them in their lost condition, crushed down under a load of sin and misery, and becomes to them what He says He is, "the Resurrection and the Life"; lifts them up step after step, until He seats them upon His own throne where He sways with a human hand the sceptre of the universe. Is this the destiny of Him who writes these words, and of those who may read them? Dear brethren, we little know how great is that salvation of which we are the subjects, and which was purchased at a price which we shall never either here or in heaven be able fully to estimate. And its results are equal to its cost; for both are far, far beyond anything we are able to conceive in this life; and even in the life to come its greatness will only be manifested by the unrolling of the unending scroll of eternity. All that even John could say was: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Yes, and even in heaven itself we shall never fully know. We can no more reach the measure of Christ or the fulness of God than

we can reach the end of everlasting life. What manner of persons ought we to be, therefore, while passing through this perilous "little while," upon the right improvement of which so much depends?

"IN HIS WILL IS OUR PEACE."

DANTE has a grand line, which, translated into English, gives us this profound aphorism, "In His will is our peace." Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy will be done"; and at the close of His valedictory address to His disciples, He says, "These things have I spoken to you that in me ye might have peace." That they might know God's will He had spoken to them not only on that occasion, but they had been under His instruction through a series of years. In the beginning of that address He says, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." And again He says, "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." That man's condition is one of perfect peace, no matter what disturbances there may be around him. But how does he get this supremest blessing that a creature can enjoy? By keeping Christ's words; yielding a sincere and hearty obedience to His will. The highest act of obedience to God's will that it is in our power to render is to "believe on Him whom He hath sent." This, Jesus Himself declares, is the work which the Father gives us to do. This is faith, the foundation grace in Christian character. This is the bond of union between the vine and the branches of

which Jesus speaks—the channel through which all blessings flow. Until this union is formed it is but mockery for us to say, "Thy will be done."

Faith gives a cheerful submission to the divine will, because it enables us to reach a calm and quiet persuasion that God's will, whatever it may be, however dark and mysterious, however afflictive, is always good for us—better than anything that we could have devised. When Martha and Mary sent word to Jesus that he whom He loved was sick, they were doubtless terribly tried at what would seem to them to be cold neglect, because He made no response until the friend whom they knew He loved had died and was buried. But the sequel showed them that He knew what was best for them and for believers of all ages. In that incident we can see how good it is to "trust in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." Those two sisters, when they saw their brother sinking to death, would have been very glad to have had their wills done; but when they saw him arise from the tomb in health and strength at the call of Him who loved him, they would be fully persuaded that Christ's will was better than theirs. And what was true in the case of that family in Bethany is true of every Christian in the world.

The petition, "Thy will be done," comprehends our active obedience to all things whatsoever the Master commands. Our obedience brings us nearer to Him, and thus we live in the light of His countenance and have a sweet and abiding assurance of His love. Thus in Him we have peace, because there is harmony between His will and ours.

When drawing near to the grave, whether from advanced age or mortal disease, then is the time "to lie passive in His hands, and know no will but His." Whether it is better to depart and be with Christ or to abide here a little while longer is a problem which the saint is unable to solve. Sometimes there is a strong and eager desire to depart; but this, when it is merely the working of the human will, is wrong and partakes of the element of selfishness. On the other hand, when the Christian perceives that it is God's will to call him hence, and when that knowledge fills him with joy, it is right, eminently right; and it is so because his will and God's will are in harmony.

When a dear friend is trembling between life and death, we earnestly desire and pray that his life may be spared; and to do so is not wrong. Still, if we are Christians, the petition, "Thy will be done," will mingle with our prayers for the life of the loved one. But let us examine carefully what lies behind that expressed submission. Does it arise from a forced and reluctant yielding to a Power which we know we can not resist? Is it like the submission of the minority to the majority in political conflicts? Or is it a blessed assurance that the denial of our petition is better both for us and for the subject of our prayers than the granting of them would be? If so, then we have peace, because our will and God's will are in harmony, and thus in Him we have peace.

Jesus, in prospect of His impending sufferings, once prayed, "Father, save me from this hour!" but it was no sooner uttered than it was taken

back; for He remembered that it could not be granted. Then He exclaimed, "Father, glorify Thy name!" Instantly His troubled soul was at peace, and His next utterances were those of joy and triumph (see Jno. xii. 27–32). And in the agony of Gethsemane His language was, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." "He was oppressed and He was afflicted" as no one ever was before or since, yet see how He acted; and thus He became the great exemplar of all the sons and daughters of affliction. His momentary horror, of which John speaks, was quickly succeeded by joy and peace; while the more protracted paroxysm in Gethsemane was followed by a calmness and courage the most sublime of anything on record. I mean His surrender to the armed band whom Judas led to the place where he supposed He would be found. His full submission to the will of His Father gave that calm courage which bore Him through the unimaginable horrors of His sacrifice, when His soul was made an offering for sin.

Peter in his second epistle (iii. 9) tells us that the Lord is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." But Jesus tells us that "with God all things are possible"; why, then, if He is not willing that any should perish, and all things are possible with Him, do any perish? Jesus answers this awful question in several places in His teachings, especially in His talk with Nicodemus, and in these emphatic words to the Jews in the temple—"Ye will not come unto

me that ye might have life." It is God's will or desire that all should come to repentance, that all should believe on Him whom He sent; but in that most important of all things He does not bring His will into conflict with that of the sinner. If the sinner comes at all it must be his own act—he must be a volunteer, not a conscript. God invites, persuades, draws, reasons, warns, and even threatens; but He does not use force, nor put forth such power as He does in His providential government. This is the law of the kingdom of grace; and thus a tremendous condemnation falls upon the head of every one who "obeys not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is worse than rebellion; it is contempt.

THE SECRET OF THE LORD.

AMONG the rich and varied blessings appended to His messages to the seven churches—one to each—promised by Christ "to him that overcometh," that in the message to the church in Pergamos is so peculiar, so figurative and mystical, and at the same time so rich and precious when properly understood, that it may be profitable to both the writer and the reader to discuss it in a few words. It is in these words:

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna; and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

Both the blessings promised here relate to the innermost and profoundest personal experience of the believer. This hidden manna and this white stone are not figures of blessings reserved for the spirits of the just made perfect in a higher and better life than this, but a part and most important part of the provision which "the Lord of the way," as Bunyan expresses it, has made for His pilgrims through this life to that which is higher and better. The manna they may gather every day and every hour. It may be found in equal abundance in the gloomy valley and on the sunlit mount. In prosperity and adversity, in the bloom of youth, in the vigor of manhood, and in the decrepitude of age it

is alike within reach. But the natural eye can not discern it; it requires that of faith. It is the Lord Jesus Himself who tells us that He is the living bread which came down from heaven, and that he that cometh to Him shall never hunger. It is that vital union with Him which He sets forth in another place under the figure of a branch abiding in and drawing sustenance from the vine. The process is a hidden one; but the leaves and the fruit attest the reality of the nourishment which it draws. So the hidden manna of which Christ speaks is that all-satisfying grace which He gives His people, as the vine gives its strength and vitality to the branch. If they ever hunger it is their own fault. It is because they neglect to gather that hidden manna which was so sweet when they first found it. The Israelites in the desert, after feasting upon manna for a time, lusted after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and for this they suffered, just as Christians often neglect the hidden manna and seek after the wealth, honors, or pleasures of this world to their own serious detriment.

The white stone is described by the apostle without a figure in these words: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." The white stone is our title-deed to that ineffable inheritance. No man can see the stone or the name written thereon save he that receiveth it; for it is securely lodged in his own deep inner consciousness. He knows it, for he feels that it is there. With that knowledge he is able to say with the apostle: "I

am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Dr. Watts, in one of the simplest and most beautiful of his lyrics, tells us what the possession of this white stone is where he says:

> "When I can read my title clear
> To mansions in the skies,
> I bid farewell to every fear,
> And wipe my weeping eyes."

That poor penitent who went into the house of Simon the Pharisee where Jesus reclined at meat, washed His feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, and then anointed them, and to whom He said, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace," bore away with her that blessed white stone with a name written on it which she alone could read. And she has it yet; and that name written upon it will grow brighter and brighter forever. She overcame; she loved much, and that hidden manna was thenceforth her food, and that white stone her most precious jewel—one that can never be taken from her.

THE VITAL ELEMENT IN FAITH.

THERE is no grace around which more precious promises cluster than that which in Scripture language is called Trust. Faith, in its dead or inoperative form, is simply belief; trust is confidence in or reliance upon that which is believed. The former, when alone, is dead; but when combined with trust in God and His word, it becomes a living principle. It then constitutes that bond of union between the vine and the branches of which the Saviour speaks in the fifteenth chapter of John.

We believe in thousands of things on the testimony of others, in which the element of trust is impossible; for example, in the historical fact that such a man as Alexander the Great lived; or in the scientific fact that Sirius is much larger than our sun. Such belief as this is belief of truth, and may in loose language be called Faith; but it lacks the religious or vital element. Then again we may, without moral injury, believe in that which is not true. For many centuries the belief that this world was the centre of the universe, and that the sun, moon, and stars revolved around it, was held by all. But this error did no injury to those who entertained it, because in that hypothesis the element of trust did not and could not enter. On the other hand, in the days of Elijah a majority of the people

of Israel believed that Baal was God. This was a very different matter; because if they believed that Baal was God, they trusted in him as far as they trusted at all; therefore trust in Jehovah was to them impossible. To accept an erroneous cosmical theory was not to believe a lie in the Bible sense of that phrase; but to believe in Baal was to believe a lie, because it involved the religious element in those who did so. To believe in the living God and rely upon Him, or trust in Him, which is the same thing, is life; but to believe and trust in a false god is death.

Speaking as Christians we can not say that the mere belief in a historical or scientific fact or truth is faith, for it is not. Neither can the mere assent of the mind to the truth of religious facts or doctrines be properly called faith. Important as such assent is, there is no life in it until the active principles of confidence, reliance, and trust come in and establish a personal union between Christ and the soul. This belief of the truth, this reliance upon and confidence in Him who is the centre and embodiment of all truth, is the faith that works by love, purifies the heart, overcomes the world, and casts out fear or dread. Nothing short of this principle, which not only accepts the truth, but combines trust with it, and thus becomes an active and saving power, is worthy of the name of Faith.

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," said Paul in answer to the anxious inquiry of the Philippian jailer. The man was anxious and greatly alarmed, and his question showed that he was eager to find something upon which he could

rely, something which he could trust in, to save him from the wrath to which his awakened conscience told him he was exposed. He did believe, and he did trust, and he found peace and joy in his new-found faith. He accepted as true not only that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, but that he himself had an interest in that great salvation, that his sins were forgiven, that he was accepted in the Beloved as a child of God, for the Spirit bore witness with his spirit that he was so, and hence we read that "he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his straightway; and when he had brought them into his house he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Here we see true Christian faith with all its proper elements and fruits. We see the assent of the reason, and the fond clinging of one who is in fearful danger, and fully aware of his danger, to the only name given amongst men whereby he could be saved. Then we see the fruits of that faith and joy in the love which prompted him to do all he could for the comfort of the much-abused men who had done so much for him.

The jailer believed, trusted, appropriated, and joyfully rested upon the Saviour he had found, and became not almost but altogether a Christian. Now look at the difference between his case and that of Felix, before whom Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come until he trembled. He was deeply interested; his judgment assented to the truth of what the apostle said; he was alarmed, as we know by his trembling; but his

heart was not ready just then to receive the truth in the love of it as the jailer had done. Then, partly to satisfy his own conscience, and partly out of politeness to his faithful and intrepid prisoner, he replied: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." Felix's reason did not reject the truth, but his heart did; and there is no probability that that convenient season ever came in his case.

So much for trust in Christ for salvation. Now let us look over that all-embracing field of which the apostle speaks in this glorious text (Rom. viii. 32): "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" That covers all, reaches to everything that affects our daily lives, even to what may be regarded as the most trivial. To give us the strongest possible impression of the extent of God's care for us, Jesus says: "The hairs of your head are all numbered." This is one of those great sayings of our Lord of which—while we never think of denying it—few of us make any practical use. How few of us feel a pleasant and constant assurance that God sustains and guides us in all our ways, in the smaller affairs of life as in the greater—that all our blessings, all our trials, no matter through what agency they may come, are from the Lord. David prays in the Seventeenth Psalm in these remarkable words: "Deliver my soul from the wicked which is Thy sword; from the men which are Thy hand, O Lord." If even the injuries which come from the wicked are God's sword, God's hand, how much more are the bene-

fits which He heaps upon us! When Satan desired to sift Peter and his companions as wheat, the Lord permitted him to do it. So far the devil acted as the Lord's instrument, and the result was good for them and for God's people of all generations. So when believers are reviled and persecuted, and all manner of evil said of them falsely, what does the Master tell them to do? Does He tell them to fret, and worry, and get angry, and quarrel, and fight, or to go to law against the slanderers? The very opposite. He bids them rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is their reward in heaven. He then most solemnly enjoins them not to resist evil. Now what principle underlies a cheerful obedience to this seemingly self-denying precept? Trust in God, a persuasion that this wrong is permitted as a part of His fatherly discipline, and that He will make it work for good. Such a persuasion, when it acts upon the heart and life and subdues all unholy passion, is trust in its sublimest manifestation, and renders the precepts, "Resist not evil," "Love your enemies," "Do good to them that hate you," "Pray for them that despitefully use you," as reasonable, as easy, and still more blessed than is obedience to that other beautiful precept, "Love the brethren." David, in the Psalm just quoted, gives us the key to all this in recognizing God's hand in the injuries inflicted upon him by the wicked. So much for evil things.

Now let us turn to good things—things which we need, things which conduce to our well-being in life. Psalm xxxiv. 10: "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Psalm xxxvii. 3:

"Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Verses 23–25: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand. I have been young and now am I old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Proverbs xvi. 20: "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." Every one of these declarations and promises refers not to the life to come, but to this life, its vicissitudes, trials, wants, and supplies. They relate to things which are the objects of every-day faith or trust, and reach to the commonest things. David says, "I have been young and now I am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." Of those people whom he had been observing during a long life it might have been added, they trusted in the Lord, and hence he calls them righteous. Like Abraham, they believed, they trusted, and this trust was counted to them for righteousness. To them Christ's great rule applied, "as they believed so it was done unto them."

It is sadly true that there are multitudes of true believers in Christ whose faith rarely reaches down to the every-day affairs of life. They trust their souls to Him as unto a faithful covenant God; but as regards the affairs of this life they seem to act as if they were under a different administration. They trust more in themselves than in God. In the affairs of this life they appear to think that the only safe way is to walk by sight. They can not or will

not see God guiding the laws of nature, the laws of trade, and the vicissitudes of life just as truly as He guides the operations of His saving grace by His Holy Spirit. Many Christians live as though they believed that nature and human management were secular things and lay outside of God's dominion. Hence they do many things which they would not do, and ought not to do, and leave many things undone which they ought to do and would do, were they able to see God ruling all things, and to believe that He is able to make them work together for the good of those who trust in Him. Thus, as they believe so it is done unto them. If they prefer to trust in their own sagacity rather than in divine wisdom, they are left to drift before these lower forces and fall into difficulties, temptations, and snares, and into hurtful lusts, among which avarice is one of the most deadly. Often such people are suffered to fall into want and to be driven to their wits' end.

The promise, be it remembered, is to those who put their trust in the Lord, not to those who do not. Let the words of the wisest of men close this article: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs iii. 5, 6).

THE GRANDEUR OF CHRIST.

IN thinking of the greatness, the glory, the grandeur of the Lord Jesus Christ, the mind is apt to call to remembrance such passages as this from Phil. ii. 9: "God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." Or that from Ephesians i. 20, 21, where the "Father of glory" is spoken of as raising Christ from the dead, and setting Him "at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." It is well that the mind of the believer should call to remembrance such passages; but such passages carry us into "light which no man can approach unto"—to what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived—to that which the saint will only know hereafter when he shall be brought "to see Him as He is."

It is far better for us while down here, to be able, as John says he was, to behold His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, at the time when "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth," than to indulge in our poor imaginings of the glory which lies beyond the experience of this mortal life. Let us then try to look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our

faith, while He was a dweller among us—while He was a man of sorrows; while He was going about doing good; while He was like unto His brethren in labor, temptation, and suffering, while He stooped to the condition of the lowest without abating one iota of His personal dignity, or of His immeasurable claims, or of the grandeur of the incarnate God. It is of this that the evangelist John speaks when he says, "we beheld His glory." It is true that he says in another place, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." In this last utterance—one of the grandest ever penned—John is speaking of seeing Christ in His unveiled glory in heaven; but in the other he is speaking of the glory which he saw in Him as he walked with Him in the days of His flesh.

It is a poor and mistaken conception to suppose that Christ divested Himself of His glory when He assumed the human form. True, men could not see it, for it was veiled from their eyes. Even His little chosen flock could hardly see it while He walked with them and led them to fountains of living water; but it did burst upon their minds afterward. Peter speaks of himself and of his fellow disciples as being "eye-witnesses of His majesty"; while John, as already quoted, says, "we beheld His glory." Though meek and lowly in heart, as He declared Himself to be, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and claimed a measure of greatness, holiness, and power to which no limit can be assigned, and made demands upon the love, fealty, and devotion of His people to the measure of which

nothing can be added. Hear Him exclaim, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." "Ye call me Master and Lord and ye say well, for so I am." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me (only) but on Him that sent me; and he that seeth me seeth Him that sent me." "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "The Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him; then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations." These are a few of the many sayings of our Lord of Himself while He was in what theologians call His state of humiliation—at the time when, as Isaiah expresses it, He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief—when He was so poor and needy that He uttered these words of inimitable pathos: "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

But we greatly err if we imagine that all this contempt and rejection, with their resultant grief and sorrow; this poverty and destitution, with all the hunger, thirst, and weariness which His laborious life entailed, detracted in the smallest measure from the inherent glory and grandeur of His character. When He sat that day, weary, thirsty, and probably hungry, at Jacob's well, in conversation with the woman of Samaria who had come to get water, He was no less glorious in the eyes of beings who were able to see Him as He was than He will be when

He sits upon the throne of His glory with all the holy angels around Him and all nations gathered before Him. Although His outward conditions were as humble as they could be, almost to the verge of mendicity, His language rose on that occasion to a height of grandeur and sublimity immeasurably beyond what any mere man could utter. Thus out of the lowest depths of what men call His humiliation, His glory, His dignity, and the moral grandeur of His character shone forth with surpassing splendor.

When at length the supreme moment of His mortal life arrived—when to erring mortal vision He was going down, down, down, step after step into the dark valley of death (and to Him it was indeed very dark) He was really rising higher and higher in glory as our Mediatorial King; for then it was that "the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering."

An hour, probably, was spent in conversation in that upper chamber where He and His disciples had eaten the passover, and where He had just instituted the memorial supper. That conversation is recorded by John in the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of his Gospel. Judas had gone out at the close of the paschal feast, and it pleased the Master to give him time to accomplish his wicked purpose. Then they left the chamber in the city and went down the hill and across the little valley to the garden of Gethsemane. In the meantime He offered up that wonderful intercessory prayer for His disciples and for all believers, in which His first burst of supplication is: "Father, the hour is

come; glorify Thy Son that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." This was His surrender to the Father as an offering for sin. It was a prayer that the Lord would "lay upon Him the iniquity of us all." In those sublime words, if we are able to understand them aright, the unsearchable glory of Christ seems to be concentrated as in a focus. The eyes of all the redeemed and of the angelic hosts will forever be fixed in adoring wonder upon that voluntary act of surrender.

In Gethsemane "it pleased the Lord to bruise Him and put Him to grief" in some way which we can not yet comprehend. Probably "over there" we shall be able to understand it. But in a little while, by meek submission, He overcame, and then we find Him, calm as ever, patiently awaiting the coming of the traitor and his band. Lest the officers should make a mistake in the dark and seize the wrong man, Judas had engaged to give them a sign by saluting Jesus with a kiss, the ordinary salutation of friends when they met. When at length the band drew near, Jesus spoke to the sleeping disciples, saying: "Rise, let us be going behold, he is at hand that doth betray me" But He did not go away in order to avoid the officers who were sent to arrest Him; on the other hand, He went out and met them and inquired, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Judas' sign was not needed, although as a matter of form it was given, but only to call forth a stinging rebuke. He made the whole band also feel for a moment His invincible power; for His first reply, "I am He," caused them to reel backward and fall

to the ground. Again He advanced and repeated the question, "Whom seek ye?" "Jesus of Nazareth," was again the answer. The calm and resolute words, "I am He," once more fell upon their ears. Thus He almost compelled these men to do their duty; for it was their duty as subordinate officers to apprehend Him. But this second time He added a command which neither they nor the men who sent them were able to violate—"If, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way." Of course He meant His disciples. Then, as if to test the power of that command, Peter, in that moment of extreme excitement, drew his sword and cut off a man's ear in a mad attempt, single-handed, to rescue his beloved Master. But for the almighty power of the divine prisoner Peter would most assuredly have been seized for this rash act, or perhaps cut to pieces on the spot. But not a hand was raised against him; and he was, as his Master had commanded, suffered to go his way. Then they bound Him, but not until at the gentle request of the prisoner, "Suffer ye thus far," His arm was left at liberty long enough to touch the wounded man and heal him.

I have dwelt more fully upon the opening scenes of the great tragedy, because I think they are less studied by Christians in general than they ought to be. In the scenes which followed in the palace of the high-priest in Pilot's hall, and on Calvary, where wicked men were permitted to do all that was in their power to crush and degrade Him, urged on as they were by the unrestrained venom of hell, the glories of Christ's character shone

brighter and brighter. From the lowest depths the grandeur of our Immanuel sent forth its brightest exhibition. In the hands of these wicked and cruel men He was not a helpless victim; for, as He told Pilate, they had no power at all over Him except as it was given them from heaven. Not for a moment did He lay aside His native dignity, or cower and wilt while in their hands. It was thus that it behoved Christ to suffer; it was thus that He was made perfect through suffering; and these awful scenes upon which we have been meditating, where Christ to us seems to be the most shorn of His glory, will form the theme of the everlasting song of the redeemed in glory: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood."

TRIAL AND TRIUMPH.

JOHN in his seventeenth chapter gives us in full his intercessory prayer; but in the twelfth chapter we have a cry of agony first spoken to those before Him, then in a brief petition to the Father, which is no sooner uttered than it is taken back—"Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" Upon Him was laid the iniquity of us all. He saw as no other being could see, the tremendous flood of divine wrath coming upon Him, and He knew that the awful hour had come. For a moment He shrank back in horror, and cried, "Father, save me from this hour!" But in a moment more He remembered that even His Father could not save Him from that hour: for He adds, "but for this cause came I unto this hour." Oh, Christian, think of it! You have a Saviour; Jesus had none. You can flee from the wrath to come; He could not. You can walk through the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil, for the rod and staff of your great Shepherd comfort you; but He, when He passed through, encountered and bore infinite evil. This filled Him with horror and alarm, and drew from Him that passionate but unavailing cry. On every side He was shut up. Even God could not save Him and remain true to His own law and faithful to His promises. That jeering cry which was uttered while He hung upon

the cross, was terrific because it was true—He saved others; Himself He could not save.

But after all He triumphed. Yielding His soul an offering for sin, He sprang to a higher plane and cried, "Father, glorify Thy name." At once a voice from the Eternal Throne replied, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Then was given to Him a vision of "the travail of His soul," which scattered the thick darkness that had just involved Him, and at once left Him in His mental agony, yet lifted Him above it. His utterance of the cry, "Father, glorify Thy name," was the sublimest instance of submission on record—so great that it brought an audible response from heaven.

We have heard His cry of anguish; now we have His shout of triumph uttered the next minute: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." In all the history we have of the life and character of our Lord, there is no incident grander or more affecting than this. He was saved from no part of the awful penalty which He had taken upon Himself; the uttermost farthing was exacted; He was not saved, nor could He be; but He overcame all. While, like His brother man, He was weak and subject to anguish, terror, and even horror; like His Father, God, He was Almighty, and nothing was too hard for Him to accomplish, too heavy for Him to bear.

But as He rose from deep distress, so may we, and by the same process—the full submission and

surrender of our will to the will of His Father and our Father, and by the hearty adoption of His prayer, "Father, glorify Thy name!" Then, no matter how thick the darkness that surrounds us, or how wild the storm, He will at once lift us above them, and enable us to triumph as Jesus did on that occasion.

CHRIST'S SURRENDER.

THE notion is apt to creep into some minds that our Saviour was finally overcome by His enemies—that the armed band which Judas led to the garden, and into whose hand he betrayed Him, was a power and a trap from which He could not escape. But this is a very mistaken idea. Not until His hour had come; not until He had finished His active mission; not until He had appointed the beautiful and simple rite which should commemorate His love and His death to the end of time; not until He had uttered His farewell address to His disciples, which yet falls upon His people as a shower of heavenly manna; not until He had made His great intercessory prayer for His immediate disciples, and for all who should believe on Him through their word; and not until He had gone triumphantly through the horrors of Gethsemane, could any power either human or satanic touch Him—not until, in His own good pleasure, He surrendered Himself to those who had long been eager to destroy Him. Herein we see the truth of His own sublime declaration, "I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . . Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it

again" (John x.). Nothing can be clearer or stronger than these words.

Let us look at a few incidents in the earlier days of His ministry. Luke tells us in his fourth chapter of the preaching of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth. At first the people were amazed at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth; but as He went on they became angry, thrust Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill whereon it was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. But what says the historian? "He passing through the midst of them went His way, and came down to Capernaum." They had no power to harm Him in the least; and yet He wrought no miracle to escape from the furious mob. Speaking of this incident, Canon Farrar, in his Life of Christ, remarks:

"His hour was not yet come, and they were saved from the consummation of a crime which would have branded them with everlasting infamy. 'He passed through the midst of them and went on His way.' There is no need to suppose an actual miracle; still less to imagine a secret and sudden escape into the narrow and tortuous lanes of the town. Perhaps His silence, perhaps the calm nobleness of His bearing, perhaps the dauntless innocence of His gaze overawed them. Apart from anything supernatural, there seems to have been in the presence of Jesus a spell of mystery and of majesty which even His most ruthless and hardened enemies acknowledged, and before which they involuntarily bowed. It was to this that He owed His escape when the maddened Jews in the Temple took up stones to stone Him; it was this that made the bold and bigoted officers of the Sanhedrim unable to arrest Him as He taught in public during the feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem; it was this that made the armed band of His ene-

mies, at His mere look, fall before Him to the ground at the garden of Gethsemane. Suddenly, quietly, He asserted His freedom, waved aside His captors, and overawing them by His simple glance, passed through their midst unharmed. Similar events have occurred in history, and continue still to occur. There is something in defenceless and yet dauntless dignity that calms even the fury of a mob. 'They stood — stopped — inquired — were ashamed — fled — separated.'"

As this quotation touches several other incidents in point, we pass on at once to that greatest of all such incidents, where our Lord at length surrenders Himself to the will of His enemies, and thus fulfilled "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," to be crucified and slain by their wicked hands. He had just uttered His intercessory prayer. Then, probably, there was a short period of silence while He led them to Gethsemane. As He and the disciples walked a horror of great darkness fell upon Him, the nature or depth of which no finite mind can comprehend. He yearned for the company and the watchful and prayerful sympathy of His disciples, especially His favorite three, but they slept, and He had to pass through the awful conflict alone. His agonizing prayer that the cup might pass from Him could not be granted. He then bowed in meek submission to His Father's will; but so terrible was the struggle that drops of bloody sweat fell to the ground. Still the poor dispirited disciples slept. Their spirit was willing but their flesh was weak. Strength was sent to Him through an angel from heaven, and the victory was won. Then Jesus walked back to the disciples, and in pitying accents said, "Sleep on now and

take your rest," while He Himself, calm as ever, took the place of watchman. He could now do without their society and their sympathy. How long He watched we know not, but it was probably but a short time; for His next words were, "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me!"

So far we have followed Matthew's narrative. Now we turn to John for the particular account of Christ's surrender, which Matthew and the other evangelists do not give. "Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood with them. As soon then as He had said unto them I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground. Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye? and they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He; if therefore ye seek me let these go their way" (Jno. xviii. 3–8).

Unquestionably there was something in the effect which followed the first utterance of the words, "I am He," partaking of the nature of the miraculous, whether that effect was produced by the majesty of His countenance, the tone of His voice, or His unseen power. Their going backward and falling to the ground attested their utter impotency to go in the slightest degree beyond His pleasure.

His repetition of the question, "Whom seek ye?" would give them sufficient courage to repeat in trembling accents their first reply that they were seeking Jesus of Nazareth. "I have told you that I am He," said He; "if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." Thus He made a full surrender of Himself to His enemies; but in the words, "let these go their way," He cast the shield of His omnipotence over His disciples, which all the powers of earth and hell could not have broken through or harmed a hair of their heads. While the officers were bringing their cords to bind their prisoner, the rash and inconsiderate Peter drew his sword and attacked the band single-handed, and with a furious but unskilful blow cut off a man's ear. Jesus saw it, bade him put up his sword, and then said, "Suffer ye thus far," and healed the wounded ear with a touch. What He meant by "suffer ye thus far" is uncertain; but it was probably a request to have His hand left free long enough to do that miracle of healing. But why was the impetuous Peter suffered to escape after such an act? Jesus had said, "let these go their way," and His was the same voice which had said in the beginning, "Let there be light," and there was light —the same voice which had said to the wind and the waves on the Galilean lake, "Peace, be still!" It was the voice of Omnipotence.

The surrender of Christ was altogether voluntary. He almost compelled those frightened officers to do what they supposed to be their duty, for they were men under authority. He commanded them to permit the disciples to go their way in peace,

and He was obeyed; for on that occasion, and during the tumult of the following day, not one of them was molested. In the deep darkness of that terrible hour, from the upper chamber to Joseph's tomb, the greatness and glory of our Redeemer shine forth with unabated lustre. All the way through, while apparently helpless and overcome, He vindicated the truth of His great saying, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh it from me." Yet by wicked hands He was crucified and slain, and His murder was the most stupendous crime that ever was or ever can be perpetrated. Still it was in this way that "Jehovah laid upon Him the iniquity of us all."

"Come, then, expressive Silence, muse His praise."

LIMITING THE HOLY ONE.

"ALL power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," said Jesus, when He gave to His apostles their commission to go and teach all nations. No language can be more comprehensive or more unlimited. As He is spoken of in First Timothy and in the Revelation, He is "the King of kings and Lord of lords." His dominion is absolutely boundless. All the forces of nature, the greatest and the least, are under His control, as He showed that they were when He commanded the winds and the waves and they obeyed Him; when He constrained a fish in the Sea of Galilee to bring Him a little coin wherewith to pay His own and Peter's tribute; and when even the grave gave up its dead at His bidding. "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." David, in the 72d Psalm, tells us emphatically that "all nations shall serve Him." Paul, writing to the Philippians, says: "God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." In the margin of the revised version, "things under the earth" is rendered "things of the world below"; or, as we would express it in the phraseology common to-day,

"secular things," such as learning, science, inventions, laws, politics, and all the machinery of government and civilization. In all these Scriptural expressions there are no limitations. When Jesus appeared in glorious vision to John on Patmos, He proclaimed Himself in these sublime words: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." In all the New Testament there is not a single passage which assigns to our Lord any definite field of authority or rule. Peter, in the house of Cornelius, speaking of Christ, says, "He is Lord of all." That word "all" embraces every existing thing—Nature, to its utmost limits and with all its forces; nations, with all their powers and institutions; angels and men, and all things having life, whether on land or in the seas. The inspired word teaches us that the dominion of the Son embraces ALL in the broadest and fullest sense of that little yet boundless word.

This being true, nations, as such, are under the dominion of Christ as the King of kings. They are bound at their peril to acknowledge that "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," and to take their places under Him as their supreme Lawgiver. It is not enough to speak in phrase as vague as it is grandiloquent of "the Supreme Ruler of the Universe," a being of whom man knows nothing except as He is revealed through His Incarnate Son. A being whom men call God may be so acknowledged while Christ is despised, rejected, and ignored. But such a being as that is not the Lord God of the holy prophets and Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ—nothing indeed but a creature of the imagination which men conjure up and invest with such qualities and attributes as suit their own views. Just as well might they, as national rulers, set up the Jupiter of Grecian mythology, or the Allah of the Moslems, or the Brahma of the Hindoos as the Supreme Ruler, as that being whom they call God, apart from Him to whom the Eternal Father has committed all power and all authority in heaven and on earth, and through whom He has revealed His will to men. Yet this is as far as the Declaration of Independence goes; as far as any of our State Constitutions go; as far as our thanksgiving proclamations go.

It is written, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father who hath sent Him." As a nation—I don't say as a people—we have not honored the Son, and, therefore, according to these words of God, spoken to us through the Son, we have not honored the Father. But, worse still, in our supreme national law there is not the slightest recognition of the Deity in any form, or of any source of authority higher than ourselves—"We the people of the United States." Under such a state of things we stand as an organized nation in jeopardy every hour; for the awful words of Him who wields all power in the universe apply to nations as much as they do to individuals—"He that denieth me shall be denied before the angels of God." To ignore Him is to deny Him; for He

Himself declares, "He that is not with me is against me." There is no neutral ground. If the Word of God be true we are as a nation in danger of being dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel; for He says in the Second Psalm that He will do this, and then adds this solemn admonition: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little." Then He adds, "Blessed (happy) are all they that put their trust in Him." These warning words are addressed, not to religious, but to civil rulers.

"But," argue many, "we are not all agreed upon this subject. We have Jews among us who do not believe in Jesus Christ; and there are others who do not accept the Bible as the word of God. We should, as it is falsely claimed, violate the consciences of such, and offend them, were we to acknowledge Jesus Christ as our supreme Lawgiver. This, it must be admitted, is our dilemma; so we are obliged to elect whom we shall offend; for we can not avoid giving offence to some of the parties concerned. If we ignore Christ we shall avoid any quarrel with Jews and Infidels; but according to the above-quoted texts we shall grievously offend our God, be in danger of perishing—of being dashed in pieces. We are left free to choose whom we shall endeavor to please; and if the good-will of the Jew and the Infidel is preferred to that of 'Him who dwelt in the bush,' and whose solemn warning is quoted above, it is to be pre-

sumed that we are prepared to abide the consequences."

This, however, is not the particular point at which I am at present aiming. There is a phrase, current and hackneyed, which has crept into use, especially in our pulpits, in which our Redeemer is spoken of as "the King and Head of the Church." To most minds the phrase sounds reverent and devout—quite unexceptionable. It did so to mine until I thought about it more closely, and discovered that no such language or idea is to be found in the inspired volume. True, Paul speaks of Him as "the head of the body, the Church"; but that is very different from the phrase to which I am taking exception; for it, taken in connection with that much-abused text—"My kingdom is not of this world"—limits, in the minds of multitudes of simple-hearted believers, the kingdom of our blessed Lord to the Church, and to the Church alone, excluding nations as such, and all human beings, and all affairs outside of the Church—what we call "the world," as contradistinguished from the Church; thus leaving them outside of any known or revealed supernal authority, or rule, or care, to be driven by the blind forces of Nature, or Chance, or Accident, or the erratic passions, opinions of men, without the guiding hand of Him who tells us that He is invested with universal dominion, of whose kingdom there is no limit either in space or in duration, and whose law binds us as firmly in the act of casting a ballot as in that of partaking of the Lord's Supper. Such man-made phrases, however reverent, sincere, and well intended, are harmful, be

cause misleading. This one leads—not intentionally, but blindly—to erroneous notions as to the extent of the kingdom, rule, providence, and care of the King of kings, confining Him in idea to the Church, and leaving everything else to what some choose to call "the general providence of God"—another man-made phrase, incapable of definition—or to Natural Law, as others would prefer to express it; or to chance or luck, as the ignorant and profane imagine; all of which, however expressed, is a vast, vague, unknown, undefined administration carried on, or suffered to drive on, outside of the Church, and of course, in the thoughts of many, outside of the dominion of Him whom that unfortunate phrase confines to that limited dominion

GAMALIEL'S TEST.

THE progress of Christianity in the world is, in itself, a greater wonder than any miracle recorded in the Scriptures. Let us look at it for a moment from a strictly human stand-point. In the village of Nazareth there dwelt a poor family, the head of which earned his livelihood by working as a carpenter. The oldest juvenile member of that family assisted in this labor. After thus living an obscure life until He was about thirty years of age this young man left Nazareth and entered upon a course of public teaching, calling around Him a little band of disciples composed of men as poor and obscure as Himself. His wisdom as a teacher and His kindness as a benefactor drew multitudes around Him; but the boldness of His utterances and the novelty of His doctrines excited the bitterest jealousy and opposition among the ruling classes of His countrymen. No man ever was more unprotected, so far as visible and tangible forces and influences were concerned, than He. His followers added nothing whatever to His security, and He was so poor that He Himself, in sublime pathos, exclaimed, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Thus He wandered from place to place, instructing, comforting, healing, and blessing all who came to Him, at the same time fear-

lessly denouncing the hypocrisy and wickedness of His enemies. Thus He exasperated them more and more, until finally He was arrested, subjected to a mock trial, and crucified as a malefactor.

His terrified disciples at first fled in dismay; then cautiously came together again in secret, with closed doors. Their teacher was gone. No organization had been formed. Not a word of all that that humble but extraordinary man had uttered had been recorded. To all appearance the short career of the sage and prophet of Nazareth had come to an end, and not only to an end, but a disgraceful end; and very soon He and all who had attached themselves to Him would be forgotten. And so they would have been had He been nothing more than a highly-gifted man. Nothing in the world would have come to naught more quickly. Gamaliel reasoned correctly when he told his brethren of the Jewish Sanhedrim to "refrain from these men and let them alone; for if this council or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God ye can not overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God" (Acts v. 38, 39). Never was sounder logic uttered by human lips than these words of Gamaliel. His advice had some effect upon the Jewish authorities, so that they did not, on that occasion, go to the length they had intended; but they did not let them alone; for no sooner had Gamaliel spoken than they called the apostles and beat them and commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus.

How was it that these frightened disciples, who

had now become eloquent and intrepid apostles, began the work of establishing and organizing the Christian Church so soon after the apparently ignominious death of their Master? True, He was dead; but He was alive again. He had risen from the tomb. They had seen Him and conversed with Him after His resurrection. He had given them their commission as His witnesses, and commanded them to tarry in the city until they should be clothed with power from on high. That power came on the day of Pentecost in the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and from that hour they boldly proclaimed those things which they knew to be true; and by signs and wonders God Himself bore them witness that what they taught was the truth.

But the Jewish rulers persisted in the face of all testimony both human and divine to reject Christ, and never ceased to persecute His followers. When they succeeded in putting Jesus to death they supposed that they had put an end to Him and His cause; and had the work been of men, as Gamaliel said, His death would have put an end to it; and probably not a man who has lived within the past seventeen centuries would have known that such a man as Jesus of Nazareth had ever existed. Nothing could have prevented the utter wiping out of His memory.

But when a few ignorant and unlearned men, armed with courage, skill, eloquence, and miraculous power, but with all earthly influences against them, burst upon the world and persuaded thousands to accept the Crucified One as their Saviour,

they were more puzzled, more perplexed, than they had been in the days of the Master whom they crucified. Still they resisted more and more furiously. They had power; the followers of Jesus had none; for He sent them forth, as He said He would, as sheep in the midst of wolves. They were imprisoned, stoned, slain with the sword, scattered abroad; but still they triumphed in spite of all the opposition, rage, and persecution of Jews and Gentiles. Had the religion of Christ had no higher origin than man, however gifted, it would have been stamped out of existence before the close of the century in which it originated. Gamaliel was right; and let his words be the test of the divine element in the Christian religion. Had it not been of God one hundredth part of the opposition it has met with would have been sufficient to sweep it from the earth. Indeed, the death of Jesus alone would have put an end to it.

But now what do we see? Eighteen hundred and fifty years have elapsed since Jesus died on Calvary, and still the religion which He instituted is the ground upon which the hopes of millions upon millions of the best and most enlightened of the inhabitants of the earth rest. Empires have risen, flourished, and fallen, but it remains, and is spreading farther and farther, carrying with it benefits and blessings, learning, science, civil freedom, the reign of law, and in short all that marks an advanced civilization. Still, like the sun, it shines upon this dark and disordered world, and as well might men talk of superseding the sun as to discover a substitute for Christianity.

Unaided by earthly power it started and fought its way through centuries of opposition. It has ever been strongest when the most separated from the powers of this world, and weakest and least efficient when the most closely united to those powers. All this proves that it is of God and not of men; for, so far from coming to naught, its potency over the affairs of men is ever increasing. No name on earth is now or ever has been so dear, so precious as that of Jesus. For His sake great multitudes have gladly laid down their lives in martyrdom, and still more have labored during life to make His name known to those who knew it not. The year of His birth is the central chronological era of all civilized nations from which dates are reckoned both backwards and forwards. In short, that poor Galilean peasant, who had no learning of the schools, no wealth, no patrons, and in fact less outward advantages than ordinary men, and who was at length put to death as a malefactor with all the ignominy which men could heap upon Him, and this before He had organized any thing, or had written a word, and while still a young man, has this day a name which is above every name, a name as far excelling the greatest heroes of history as the sun excels the meteor that shoots athwart the sky. Were that name only a human name, had His work been only the work of a man, both would have sunk into utter oblivion long, long ago. Gamaliel reasoned well when he said that if this work were of men it would come to naught; but if it be of God it can not be overthrown. Let his words, his test, be the answer to Col. Ingersoll, and such

people as he, who are trying to discredit the story of Jesus of Nazareth, who claimed to be the Son of God, and whose claim not only the history of the world for more than eighteen centuries, but also what we all see and know to be true this day, abundantly attest. In cool, calm rationality nothing can be sounder than this, nothing can be fairer than Gamaliel's test. He was not a friend of Christ, but he was a wise and prudent man. Very likely his ardent hope was that it would prove to be of men by coming to naught; but yet he saw in it a measure of life and potency for which he could not account, and hence his prudent counsel to his more impetuous associates.

This God-given vitality which the Church of Jesus Christ exhibits at this day, as well as it did in the long centuries past, is a stupendous miracle. It is one which we can all see for ourselves. Every century gives it increased strength. It affords the fullest assurance that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah of the Hebrew prophets, the Saviour of the world; and that His record as we find it in the New Testament is true. Therefore it is also true that "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

The application of this test with which a shrewd and sagacious man who was not a friend of Christ has furnished us, is of incalculable value; for while it may settle and satisfy the mind of the honest doubter, it can be used with great effect in shutting the mouths of scoffers and blasphemers. Moreover it is calculated to strengthen the faith and in

tensify the devotion of true believers. Paul touches this thought when he says: "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, ... that no flesh should glory in His presence."

THIS WORLD—THIS LIFE.

TO come into conscious existence from a state of non-existence is a marvellous experience. Were we ushered into being instantaneously, in the full powers of mature manhood, the experience of which we are speaking would be overwhelmingly wonderful. But the process of the development of mental power from unconscious infancy to mature human life is so gradual that we are hardly sensible of it. We find ourselves surrounded by beings like ourselves who were here before us, and their experience we unconsciously appropriate to ourselves. We learn their language, we imitate their actions, and like them become familiar with our surroundings. Knowledge flows in from every side, from experience, from observation, from instruction; and thus by a process so gradual that we hardly notice it, we arrive at what we call maturity; and then in our turn become teachers of others who have arrived since we did.

And this is what we call life. We soon learn that it must be short; but still it is all we are able to see. So far we are no higher than animals endowed with reasoning powers, and are naturally prone to seek our portion in this mortal life. So strong is this propensity that thousands who firmly believe in immortality, who know that this is not their rest, that here they have no continuing city,

and who often read the injunction of Him whom they acknowledge as their Lord and Master not to be anxious about the cares of this life, and not to set their hearts upon treasures upon earth, are as eager to acquire wealth and are as much concerned about their worldly affairs, as if this fleeting life were all that they should ever know. The earnestness of the exhortations of Jesus on this subject shows us its importance in His estimation, and also the strength of the propensity of the human mind to look at the things of this life from an opposite stand-point.

What is this world? Astronomically considered it is but one small planet among, probably, many millions—a planet marred by sin, suffering, sorrow, and death. Were it blotted out of existence it would hardly be missed even in our own solar system; in any other solar system not at all. And what is life when viewed apart from another and future life? Is it worth living? In itself it is not, nor was it intended to be.

But what is this world when viewed in the light of heaven? Dr. Patton, in his opening sermon before the General Assembly, some two years ago, in the most confident terms called it "the Elect Planet of the Universe." Why so? Because on this planet God the Creator of the universe became incarnate, and to-day a human hand wields the sceptre over all things. Just before He ascended, Jesus uttered these solemn words: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." In the light of these plain, unmistakable words, Dr. Patton's strong language can not be gainsaid, for the

hand of Jesus—a name at which every knee shall bow (see Phil. ii. 10)—is a human hand, while at the same time it is absolutely divine.

In the relation established between the divine and the human in the incarnation we are able to see the grandeur of this world of ours—this theatre of the birth, life, labors, sufferings, death, and resurrection of the Son of God. His life and His atoning death is a theme which will fill all heaven with songs of praise forever and ever. This is a relation which lifts those who, by receiving Christ, acquire the right to become children of God, joint heirs with Christ, partakers of His divine nature, partners of His throne, and whom He is not ashamed to call His brethren, to a dignity which, to us who are still here, is altogether inconceivable. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," says John; "but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him."

"In my Father's house (doubtless meaning all this great universe) there are many mansions"; but in the next sentence the Saviour intimates that not one among them was suitable for Himself and for His redeemed ones, His brethren, His spouse; for He adds, "I go to prepare a place for you." It must be a place not yet prepared; but one where He and they shall dwell together; for He says, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." These are wonderful words, and as plain and simple as they can be. What He says He means literally. As John says, "It doth not yet appear *what* we shall be," nor do we know *where* we shall be; but we do know that we shall

be with Him, that we shall see Him, and that we shall be like Him. But eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor imagination conceived, the surpassing glories of that place. Not one of the existing many mansions in His Father's house can compare with that which Jesus is now preparing, and where the redeemed from this scene of sin and sorrow shall eat the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Some suppose that this earth, changed, renovated, and glorified, will be the abode of the redeemed. But this is mere speculation. None can positively deny it; but for my own part I do not hold that opinion; for it is nothing but an opinion. It is one of those things that "do not yet appear"; nor do we know that that abode will have all the conditions of a fixed locality.

Now how transcendently important do this world and this life appear when viewed as the seed-bed and the preparatory school for that glorious and everlasting residence of which we have just been speaking! This world was distinguished beyond all other worlds by the life, the atoning death, and the glorious resurrection of the incarnate God, and this life dignified by being made the school of Christ where His redeemed, His chosen ones, are born again and thus made children of God. It is this relation of our world to a better world, this mortal life to a glorious immortality, that gives to both this world and this life a grandeur and a dignity worthy of Almighty God their Creator, who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Bunyan tells us of a poor creature whom Christian saw on his pilgrimage, who was so busily engaged with a muck-rake, gathering sticks and straws, that he never lifted his eyes heavenward, nor intermitted what seemed to be his life-work. This world, this life, were all that that poor man had or cared to have. Perchance he was so skilful, so industrious, so successful, that he became a millionaire; but certain it is, he never acquired what Jesus calls the true riches. What Christian saw was only a sample of a numerous class, and a class that is often highly esteemed among men. How much wiser and better it is to regard this life as a pilgrimage, and this world as not our rest, but only a pilgrimage, a school, a place of trial and discipline; in a word, just what our Lord teaches us to regard it; so that we may by faith learn to trust and serve Him, be the recipients of His daily care and bounty, and walk always in the light of His countenance, thus making this world, with all its labors, sorrows, and sufferings, the best possible vestibule of heaven.

The man who is able to see this world and this life in the light just spoken of, and who has got too high to see them in any other light, enjoys life immeasurably better than does any worldling, however prosperous and however blessed with physical health. It may please God to grant him prosperity; but if riches increase he will not set his heart upon them, because he knows that he has a better, purer, richer, and more enduring inheritance. He may have large possessions on earth; but his treasure and his heart will be on high. Or it may seem good to the Lord to give him but little of this

world's goods. The fair designs he schemes may be crossed, his gourds blasted, and he laid low. Still, if his treasure, his heart, and his hope be in heaven, he will know and feel that all is well, and that, come what may, he will not lack any good thing, because he trusts in the promise of his God. He can say just as confidently as David did, "I shall not want." Often the sweetest moments in a good man's life are experienced in times of the darkest adversity; and we may greatly err when we call prosperity in our worldly affairs a blessing, and adversity an evil, a trial, an affliction. Prosperity, when viewed from the truest stand-point, is a severer trial than the opposite condition. Some are not able to stand it at all; others are. There is a world of wisdom in these few words of the psalmist: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted"; and in these: "Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me"; and in many other similar utterances of good men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and yet spoke of their own personal experience.

It is only when we set our affections on things above that we are able to put this world and this mortal life in their proper and subordinate places. Then and only then can we extract all the good out of them that is in them. In that lower place they are good, because the light of God's countenance and the abiding sense of His love illuminate them, and give us a peace and satisfaction which render all inferior amusements, excitements, and pleasures so unnecessary that we shall not be inclined to seek them as things essential to our happiness; and yet these very things will be abun-

dantly strewn along the path of our pilgrimage as additional tokens of the loving-kindness of the Lord of the way.

But let us be destitute of an inheritance on high, and let our chief good be sought in this world, and bitter disappointment and unrest are sure to be our portion. When the chief end of man terminates on this world and this life, whether that end be objects of ambition, or wealth, or sensual enjoyment, however refined, the inevitable result is disappointment and vexation of spirit.

But yet this world is good, "very good," as the Creator said it was when He put man upon it as its crown. We can not imagine an abode better adapted to such sinful beings as we are. The Lord knew what He was doing when He made it what it is; and it was in full view of all that should transpire in Eden that He pronounced it to be "very good." Satan did not spoil it; but he was permitted to make a breach through which Immanuel entered. His presence made this earth superlatively good, "the Elect Planet of the Universe," as Dr. Patton expresses it. Therefore let us rejoice in all that our Heavenly Father has done or permitted to be done. And let us thank Him for making the pilgrimage of life so brief that in a little while we shall reach a higher heaven than we could have ever reached had Adam kept his first estate. All is well; and be assured, dear ransomed sinner, that you are highly favored among God's creatures in having your lot cast in this world where Jesus spent a life of labor and sorrow, where He died for our redemption and rose again for our justification.

TIME AND ETERNITY.

THESE are words we often hear, and still oftener think of; but how shall we define them? Sometimes we hear them spoken of as if the one were progressive, the other fixed and immovable. Sometimes they are spoken of as if they were distinct and separate ideas—conditions which do not coexist. Hence it is common to say of people whose mortal life has terminated that they have passed into eternity—that they have done with time. Some journalists have a stereotyped phrase in speaking of a person who has paid the death penalty for crime, that he was "launched into eternity."

But this is all wrong. Take two other words, space (that is, boundless or infinite space) and locality. The one is analogous to eternity, the other to time; but in both cases the less is contained in the greater. Our sun, together with his system, has a locality in space; the earth has its locality in the solar system; and the American continent, the city of London, and the cottage of the peasant have their respective localities on the surface of the earth. Yet all are in that infinite space which has neither metes nor bounds, just as a minute, an hour, a day, or a year is embraced in that boundless period which we know by the term Eternity, and which has neither beginning nor end. "From everlasting

to everlasting Thou art God," expresses the eternity of Jehovah as strongly as it could be expressed in the Hebrew language: but the English phrase, the Eternal God, is stronger still. The Greeks expressed the idea of a future duration with phrases of different degrees of strength, as "age," "ages," "ages of ages," and "all the ages." The idea underlying those Greek phrases seems to be that of an endless series of ages or periods more or less distinct. In Matthew xiii. 40, Jesus speaks, as it is in our translation, of "the end of the world." In the Greek it is the end or consummation of the age, or the period now passing. The periods immediately succeeding are spoken of as ages, while indefinite extension of duration is "ages of ages," or "all the ages," the same as is expressed in the English text by the phrase "forever and ever." These successive ages are *the days of Eternity.*

In all these forms of expression the idea of progressive duration is maintained, and that of fixedness or immutability is excluded. Geology teaches us that distinct periods, different from the one through which we are now passing, have left their impress upon this globe. In the first chapter of Genesis God has given us a glimpse of several of these—there called "days"—while Peter tells us that we may look for new heavens and a new earth after the age now passing shall have ended. Thus change after change will go on, each better than the past, in the endless future; and every one to whom Jesus gives eternal life will have a share in all of them; and, after he has passed through more of these ages than the arithmetic of mortals is able

to compute, an endless, undiminished series of other ages, other changes, will still lie before him. The length of existence through which the possessor of eternal life shall have passed will, however, always be finite, measurable, computable. But oh! when the mind turns to that Being who "inhabits eternity," to whom this endless series of ages is at once and always present, how it sinks down in utter impotency of comprehension!

But these ages, endless in number, will all be measured by Time. It can measure the period of creatures of a day and also that of all those who are endowed with the power of an endless life. Time itself and all that has come into existence in the past ages, however remote, or in the present age, or in the ages to come, are finite. None are infinite in duration or ever can be, notwithstanding their life will never end. God alone is great, God alone is infinite, God alone is eternal, God alone is immutable.

How grand is the prospect before those to whom is given the unspeakable boon of an endless life! They will not only see Him who made all things, and who gave His life's blood to redeem them, but they will be led by Him to living fountains of water. They will see Him putting forth His boundless power in the creation and government of unnumbered worlds. We read of "the glory of His power," as well as the "riches of His grace," and of His love "which passeth knowledge." We now know something of the beauties of this world, and have a distant view of the glories of the starry heavens; but God is able to give us power to flit

from world to world and from system to system as easily as a winged insect flits from flower to flower, and doubtless He will do it; for the Scripture says, "all things are yours."

The flight of time is to us what it is. It seems to drag along slowly. A year is a good while in our experience. In another state of being it may be very different. The little creature which we call an ephemeron, which comes into being and dies the same day, if capable of it, may esteem its life as long as we do ours. So in heaven the flight of time may seem to be incomparably more swift than it is in this life. True, this is only speculation; but I am inclined to think that it is so. If so, the spirit of a just man made perfect will only have "a little while" to wait until his body shall be called from the grave to share in the glory and bliss of a full salvation.

"THE MORNING COMETH."

ONE of the grandest and most mysterious utterances of the Prophet Isaiah is found in the twenty-first chapter. It is all comprised in two verses, and stands unconnected with anything which precedes or follows it. It is this:

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

"The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night. If ye will inquire, inquire ye. Return, come."

The question to the watchman may have been the utterance of scorn and intellectual pride—a mere banter, and is doubled only to intensify it. It is something like the question which Pilate asked Jesus: "What is truth?" and then strode out of the hall without waiting for or wishing for a reply. But in the case before us the watchman did reply, and upon that reply I propose to offer some thoughts.

He who called to the watchman out of Seir recognized the fact that it was night. Darkness then covered the earth and gross darkness the people. This darkness had prevailed ever since Adam fell. When Noah built the ark the darkness was very deep. It was night when Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldees, and the darkness was stead-

ily deepening. It was night while the chosen people were bondmen in Egypt. It was night during all the time Israel as a nation occupied the promised land. The darkness which then overshadowed all the outside world was like that of Egypt, a darkness so dense that it could be felt; yet during that night of thousands of years God's people never ceased to have light in their dwellings, as Israel had in those three days when all the Egyptians were enshrouded in that blackness of darkness of which we read in Exodus x. 21–23.

And it was still night when Jesus came. Then there was light; but although, as John tells us, "the light shined in darkness, the darkness comprehended it not." Still, to the eye of faith, through all the centuries that have rolled their sluggish rounds since Jesus lived and died and rose again, there have been signs that "the morning cometh." Through the dark ages the gloom was so deep that the most hopeful could hardly see the least trace of that long-promised dawn. Generation after generation of believers lived and cried, "O Lord, how long?" and died without the sight.

But when the Reformation burst upon the world they were able to say, as the poet Bowring so beautifully expresses it,

> "Watchman, tell us of the night!
> For the morning seems to dawn."

That much Luther, Zwinglius, Calvin, Knox, and their contemporaries could say. But now in our day the light is so broad and bright that we are sure that "the morning cometh"—that soon "the

Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings."

But in our gladness at seeing this ever brightening light, let us not lose sight of the other clause in the watchman's reply. "The morning cometh," he says; and then he adds, "*and also the night.*" The morning and the night are spoken of as coming together, simultaneously. Strange; but it is even so. Darkness, in the figurative language of prophecy, signifies tribulation, perplexity, popular commotion, distress, anguish, apprehension, violence, strife, war, and fierce contention. It means the absence of knowledge, and of joy, and hope, and peace—of trust in God and faith in man, and consequently of love and good-will. Jesus expresses this condition of things with appalling force when He says that upon the earth there shall be "distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." These things He assures us are to come. And what then? Are His people to be alarmed when they see this awful period of darkness and terror approaching? Hear His calm and cheering words: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." In plain and simple terms, He but echoes the joyful shout of Isaiah's watchman: "The morning cometh, and also the night"; and also that of Isaiah's blood-stained warrior travelling from Bozrah in the greatness of his strength: "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

It is remarkable that in more places than can be cited here, the prophets couple together the morning of the latter-day glory and the darkness and terror of the great tribulation which is to come upon the earth at the same time. In the Second Psalm God the Son says, "I will declare the decree: Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me and I will give Thee the heathen (the nations) for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession!" Now mark what immediately follows: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." What language could express wide-spread, overwhelming calamity with greater force? Joel describes that day with the utmost strength of human language: "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in my holy mountain. Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains." Observe the language of the last clause—gloom and thick darkness spoken of "as the morning spread upon the mountains." To the eye of faith, enlightened by a careful study of God's Word, those clouds and that thick darkness are all aglow with the light of the rising Sun of Righteousness; and it is just when the earth is thus covered with thick darkness, and torn with unexampled tribulation, that Jesus bids His people "look up and lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh." Then at the close of the same chapter the prophet

utters the great prophecy which Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost, which was but a prelibation of a grander outpouring of the Spirit which God promises to pour upon all flesh in the last days, when "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy." Let us rest here for a moment and consider whether in the great work which the women of the Church are now doing, in carrying the Gospel and its blessings to the rising generation in their homes, in the Sabbath-schools, in the squalid abodes of ignorance and vice at home, and to those who are sitting in still deeper darkness in heathen lands, especially of their own sex, we do not behold a striking fulfilment of this great prophecy in which woman is given so high and honorable a place in God's sacramental host. Surely "the morning cometh."

But even here, coupled with this glorious promise for the last days of a universal outpouring of the Spirit, we have "also the night." God, through the prophet, goes on to speak, saying, "I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath—blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come." Still the morning and the night come together. Malachi speaks of that time of tribulation and terror as a day that shall burn as an oven. At the same time he speaks of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings as a

simultaneous event. But that burning of which Malachi speaks, that thick darkness of which Joel speaks, that dashing to pieces of which the psalmist speaks, and that awful tribulation and time of trouble of which Jesus Himself forewarned His people, will not be of long continuance. He Himself gives us this assurance, saying, "Then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be; and except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. xxiv. 21, 22). Whether the three days and a half (prophetic days) while the dead bodies of the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation xi. lay unburied afford any key to the duration of the great tribulation which is so much spoken of by the prophets, and with still greater plainness and solemnity by our Lord Himself, is a question I shall leave to the reader.

We have cited only a few texts, but enough to drive home to our hearts the truth so emphatically and sententiously uttered by the watchman, "The morning cometh, and also the night." What can we do better than conclude with the watchman's laconic exhortation: "If ye will inquire, inquire ye; return, come"? for this is a subject worthy of the most earnest inquiry; and He who spake as never man spake gave us this all-embracing admonition, "What I say unto you I say unto all—watch." And if, dear reader, you have wandered away to some dangerous ground of worldliness or vanity—"Return—come."

THE COMING OF CHRIST.

MANY of the most learned and eminent Christians of the present day hold the opinion that what is called the second advent of Christ will occur before the millennium—that that happy period spoken of so often in the Old Testament prophecies, and also in the New, will be the result of His personal presence among His redeemed and glorified people. This position can not with propriety be called a doctrine. It is only an interpretation; and good men may take the affirmative or the negative side of the question without at all impairing their standing as orthodox Christians. Indeed some of the most devout and intelligent men I ever knew, both ministers and laymen, were decided premillenarians. Many an interesting conversation I have had with those who held that view; and although I could not go the length that they did, yet I felt that they had much truth on their side—more, probably, than those who hold that the second coming—advent is not a Bible word at all—will not occur until the end of the world, the general resurrection and the final judgment of the just and the unjust, are inclined to admit.

In interpreting prophecies of events yet future, I think it is a safe rule to go back for examples to past predictions and events. In Malachi iv. 5 we read: "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before

the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." From Matthew xvii. 10 we learn that the Scribes taught that Elijah would literally reappear before the advent of the Messiah; hence the disciples asked Jesus, saying: "Why then say the Scribes that Elijah must first come? And He answered and said, Elijah indeed cometh and shall restore all things. But I say unto you that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they listed. Even so shall the Son of Man suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that He spake unto them of John the Baptist." These Scribes were right as to the main truth; but they erred in putting too literal an interpretation upon that prediction. Gabriel, in talking to Zacharias in the temple of the son that was to be born, said: "He shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah." The angel, no doubt, had Malachi's prophecy in his mind when he said this; for both speak of his turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, etc. But Malachi's prophecy of Elijah is probably not yet exhausted.

Our Lord's first advent was expected at the time He did come. Good old Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and so was Anna the prophetess. Under the guidance of the Spirit both knew Him when they saw Him in His early infancy; but immediately He dropped out of sight and lived for thirty years in poverty and obscurity, earning His bread by honest labor like any other man. How wide of the mark were the expectations of the Scribes and the people of Israel! They hoped first to hail the grand old prophet who had been

borne bodily to heaven, and who was to return to earth as the herald of the great King who should re-establish the throne of David, emancipate Israel from Roman bondage, stretch His dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the end of the earth, and reign forever. They imagined that all this would be a matter of ocular observation, just as our premillennial friends hope to see their Lord in open vision when He shall return to dethrone Satan, and set up His kingdom among men—the time for the fulfilment of the Father's promise, that He shall give Him the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. But in so imagining, those ancient Jews fell far below the reality. "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here," said Jesus, while standing before them in the garb of a Galilean peasant, and while He was despised and rejected of men. Thus did the reality dash to pieces the vain expectations of the Jews. Yet they had quite as good ground for expecting what they did expect as Christians of the present day have for expecting a grand epiphany prior to the promised triumph of the Church, as it is so glowingly depicted in the Scriptures.

When the Spirit was poured out upon the apostles and upon the assembled multitude on the day of Pentecost, Peter told his astonished hearers, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my

servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come; and it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." We have here inspired testimony that Joel's great prophecy was correctly applied to the day of Pentecost; but who will venture to assert that that great prediction was fully accomplished and exhausted on that occasion? Great as the event was, it was but an earnest, a prelibation, of that greater outpouring of the Spirit of which Joel speaks, which shall reach all flesh; and be not only coextensive with the habitable globe, but be accompanied with tremendous commotions expressed by the strong figures of blood and fire and vapor of smoke—the sun turned into darkness and the moon into blood. The baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was local, limited, and not marked by any commotion either in the physical elements, or by the disruption of civil or social institutions among men. Yet it was the beginning of that fulfilment—enough for that time.

Let us keep ever before us the vastness, the universality of the promise, and the time mentioned: "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." Can any believer wish for plainer or stronger language? Yet Peter applied it to the day of Pentecost, just on the same principle that our Saviour

used the calamities which were then impending over Jerusalem as the earnest of the great tribulation which should occur long afterward, as we would say; yet not "until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled," as He expressed it. During the interval between the destruction of Jerusalem and the last great tribulation there should be wrath upon this people and "they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and they shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This part of the prediction began to be accomplished history in forty years after the words were uttered; and ever since then that scattered and yet distinct and strongly marked people have remained in the sight of all mankind an ever-growing attestation of its truth. To-day Jerusalem lies under the heel of the most formidable foe which either the Old or the New Testament Church ever had.

Then (Luke xxi. 25), the divine Prophet passes on to the end of this age of darkness and trouble, saying: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

The signs in the sun, moon and stars, and the "sea and the waves roaring," are figures, the first of human authorities of every grade, the second of aroused and ungovernable multitudes whom no human power or law can hold in quietness and order. It is a strong picture of a reign of terror—of tottering thrones and popular anarchy. Yet Jesus tells His believing people to look up and lift up their heads, when they see these terrible things, for then their redemption draweth nigh. Malachi, under different imagery, speaks of the same thing. He says in his closing chapter, "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven: and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings." See the perfect harmony between these two sublime warnings and promises of what is coming—wrath and grace, gloom and glory, so strangely mingled.

But in almost every place where the great consummation is mentioned both in the Old Testament and the New, these opposites are conjoined. See the great promise of the Father to the Son in the Second Psalm: "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." That is the solemn decree which issued from the Eternal Throne. Had He said no more, we might readily have supposed, as Dr. Watts expresses it:

"That all was mercy, all was mild,
And wrath forsook the throne."

But the very next sentence is the language of wrath and overwhelming destruction: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." How different is all this from the fond notions which people love to cherish of the coming of the millennium, whether they expect a visible coming of the Son of Man, or only a universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as Joel expresses it!

That "that day," so often spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, that great and dreadful day, that day that shall burn as an oven; that day when the blood-stained Traveller from Bozrah shall cry, "The day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come"; that day of which Jesus speaks, when nations shall be in perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, and the hearts of men failing for fear of what is coming on the earth, and when true believers are called upon to look up and lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh, is now drawing near, all the signs of the times indicate. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. The Lord whom His people have long been seeking will soon and suddenly come to His temple; but who may abide the day of His coming? Remember His own mysterious but pregnant question—"When the Son of Man cometh, will He find faith on the earth?" When He came in the flesh faith was almost extinct. "The world knew Him not." Why? Because He did not come in the manner people expected Him to come. So, I think, it will

be when He comes to take possession of the earth according to the promise of the Father. In the Ninety-seventh Psalm we are told how He will come, and it is in perfect accordance with all the other prophets, Jesus Himself included. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation (or establishment) of His throne. A fire goeth before Him and burneth up His enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth." It will be a time of trouble, of darkness and rebuke. Daniel (xii. 1) says, "there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time Thy people shall be delivered." There will be but few on earth whose faith will be strong enough to see, through the shadows, clouds, and darkness of "that day," the glory that lies beyond.

Milton, in his "Paradise Lost," draws a terrific picture of a war in heaven between the loyal and the rebellious angels. His imaginary picture is based upon Rev. xii. 7. He locates the conflict not on earth, but in heaven, and fixes the time before man was created. He gives the details of the battle, which continued for several days, until at length the contending hosts tore up the hills of heaven and hurled them upon each other until all was wreck and ruin around them. But neither could prevail over the other. At length, after the fidelity and courage of the faithful angels had been sufficiently tried, the Son, armed with almighty

power, mounted His chariot and drove to the field of conflict. At His approach the hills went back to their places, clothed as before with forests and flowers in all the grandeur and beauty of the celestial landscape. So He describes that better world, and then remarks:

> "Earth hath this variety from Heaven,
> Of pleasure situate in hill and dale."

The Son then calls His faithful warriors from the field of conflict with words of high commendation, and bids them stand while He, with a countenance changed to terror "too fierce to be beheld," turns upon the rebel hosts and drives them over the battlements of heaven down to the bottomless pit. It is a daring flight of poetic imagination too bold to meet the approbation of the reverent believer. But, after all, Milton wrote better than he himself knew; for it is only necessary to change the theatre of the conflict which he describes from that world to this, the faithful angels to the faithful among men, and to extend the period of the battle from three or four days to more than eighteen centuries, to have an allegorical picture of the Church militant. The loyal angels were not able to prevail against that rebel host led by Satan, as Milton tells us; nor have the saints been able to cope with and overthrow the powers of darkness in this world. But we have full assurance that when the Son of Man shall come the kingdom of Satan shall fall as lightning from heaven.

The kindness of the Son to His faithful warriors who had done what they could, as Milton so touch-

ingly portrays it, in marshalling them as honored spectators of the total rout of the mighty and malignant host against which they had long contended, is very suggestive of the kind words of the Lord of hosts to His faithful people as we read them in the two closing verses of Isaiah xxvi., and which apply to the events of which we have been speaking: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast; for behold the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain."

This is enough for one article. From what I have said, the reader will perceive that I am one of those who believe that Christ will come and take to Himself His great power and reign, and receive of the Father the heathen (or the nations) for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth as His possession, ere the Church can hope to see that glorious period or age commonly called the millennium; that He will do what His people could never do. But in the expected manner of His coming, I am not at agreement with most of our premillenarian brethren. The discussion of that point will afford subject matter for another paper.

"NOT WITH OBSERVATION."

IN a recent article I discussed "Christ's Comings." I now propose to follow up the subject a little farther, confining what will be said at this time to that coming mentioned in Revelation xi. 15, when "the kingdom of the world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever" (revised version). This, we may safely assume, is the same period of which our Lord is speaking, where He says (Matt. xxiv. 14, revised version): "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; AND THEN SHALL THE END COME."

But the end of what? The end of the rule of that evil one whom our Saviour calls the prince of this world; the end of the Church militant, and the beginning of the Church triumphant; the end of discord, confusion, and war, and the beginning of the reign of order, righteousness, and peace; the end of hostility among the nations, and the gathering of them together as one kingdom, having one King, as one flock, having one Shepherd; and be that set time when the sublime decree found in the Second Psalm, that the heathen shall be given to the Son for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, shall be accomplished. The long conflict between the powers of light and

of darkness will then be ended, and the kingdom of heaven established. That kingdom "shall not be left to other people," says Daniel in interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, "but it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Now let us return to the Second Psalm, and see how the carrying out of that decree which gives to the Son the heathen for His inheritance agrees with the words of Daniel just quoted: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." This again harmonizes with the awful picture which Jesus gives us of that coming time of tribulation (Luke xxi.), "And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." The powers of heaven mean in this and many other places human governments and hierarchies. But in immediate view of these tremendous commotions and terrors, Jesus utters these cheering words: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." This gracious assurance accords with the beautiful words of the 91st Psalm: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked." And also with this from the lips of the strong and blood-stained traveller

from Bozrah, as written by Isaiah (lxiii. 4): "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come!"

We come now to the point indicated by the caption of this article. The proclamation that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," is one which may be made to-day as truly as it was in the days of the Baptist; and it may be near—we know not how near. The Lord, whom the Christian world has long been seeking, may suddenly come to His temple. But who is ready to abide the day of His coming? When He comes will He find faith on the earth? Who will be able to discern the Redeemer amid the tempest of wrath which will precede His coming—the roaring of the sea and the billows (as the revised version reads), strong figures representing vast popular masses in anarchy and strife; Satan enraged to the uttermost, because he knows that he has but a short time; while the kings of the earth will be taking counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed. It will be the darkest and most calamitous time the world ever saw—a day so terrible that Jesus says it will for the elect's sake be shortened, else no flesh could be saved. Amid these clouds and darkness even believers will be ready to cry, as did their Redeemer on the cross, "Why hast thou forsaken us?"

The Jews, in the days of Jesus of Nazareth, were looking for the Messiah, as Christians are now expecting the millennium. They had no doubt that they would know Him at once by observation—that He would come grandly, with all the environ-

ments of the mightiest and most glorious of monarchs. But when a humble peasant of Galilee stepped forth and claimed to be that mighty One, and made good His claim by works of which no power less than divine was capable, they rejected Him with scorn. So when He shall come in clouds and thick darkness, scattering ruin, havoc, and terror over the earth, it will require strong faith to see the Prince of Peace through such clouds.

Many imagine that the latter-day glory of the King of heaven will be slowly brought about by the labors of faithful, self-denying missionaries and other heralds of the cross. These labors are indeed necessary, for Jesus Himself says that this Gospel of the kingdom must first be preached among all nations before the end can come. They have now nearly finished that work. Like the men at Bethany whom Jesus commanded to take away the stone, they have done what they could; but when that all-potential voice shall sound, "Lazarus, come forth!" the Church shall exclaim in rapturous astonishment, "Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows?" "Who hath begotten me these? . . . . These! where had they been?" Thus will the Lord suddenly come to His temple, to this redeemed world, and "the Gentiles shall come to His light and kings to the brightness of His rising." That glorious day will come, "not by might nor by power"—that is, by human agency —"but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Thus will the consummated kingdom of God come; but, as Jesus says, "not with observation."

O Christians! push forward the work of carrying

the glad tidings of salvation to all the world, and some of you now living and acting may see the day when the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple and fill the whole earth with His glory.

THE TERROR AND GLORY OF "THAT DAY."

IN the same week on which our Lord suffered, as related by Matthew (xxiv.), He had a deeply solemn conversation with His disciples on the Mount of Olives. They had been calling His attention to the massive masonry of the temple, which to them looked as if it might, like the pyramids of Egypt, stand for ages. "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down." This prediction, which at that moment looked to the last degree improbable, was literally accomplished in about forty years afterward. The little company seem then to have walked on, after these remarkable words were spoken, until they came to the Mount of Olives. Meantime the minds of the disciples were strongly impressed with what they had just heard; for the words were strangely at variance with their preconceived notions of a restored kingdom of Israel which should transcend its ancient glory; so they came to Him privately saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The same Spirit which inspired the ancient prophets no doubt prompted this all-important question. It is the same question

which has occupied the minds of believers more or less ever since—very much during the first century, and then less and less so until the early part of the nineteenth. From time to time bold and presumptuous men came forward with theories, extravagant and wild, in which they presumed to fix the very day of our Lord's coming, and tell us all about the battle of Armageddon, both its locality and date. So far was this nonsense carried that sober-minded Christians became disgusted, and their belief or opinions on the subject of the latter-day glory were driven too far to the opposite extreme. Among the great mass of believers the glories and triumphs of "that day," so glowingly portrayed by the Hebrew prophets, could hardly be said to have been objects of well-defined faith or hope to Christians of the two or three past centuries. The progress of the Gospel among the unevangelized nations was very slow. That the whole world should ever be converted to Christ was held more as a matter of dogmatic conviction—because God in the Scriptures had declared that so it should be—than a matter of living faith which sets all the graces of the soul in motion. In this respect, however, the latter part of the current century—the very time we are now living—has witnessed a great change, which has set multitudes of Christians to asking the same question which the disciples asked their Master.

The question was, and is yet, a perfectly proper one; and not only proper but profitable. But let us stop and inquire what is involved in the question? It is, strictly speaking, one question, yet it is triple in its form. First, "Tell us, when shall

these things be?" On their way to Olivet, just before the risen Redeemer ascended to His throne on high, the disciples ventured to ask Him: "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" We learn from this that all that the Lord had said, and all that He had done in His life, His death, and His resurrection, had failed to dislodge from the minds of these men the delusive notion that the object of the mission of the Messiah to this world was to restore the kingdom to Israel and re-establish the throne of David. On that occasion He pointedly refused to tell them anything about it, saying, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons." But not so did He put them off on the occasion of which we are speaking. In words of awful eloquence, partly clear, partly obscure, He launched forth into a long prophetic discourse upon the events which should transpire from that hour until the end—until the great conflict which He began in His own person, and which should be continued in His people, His Church, should end in victory, and in a universal reign of righteousness and peace.

"What shall be the sign of Thy coming?" is the second member of the question. What suggested that particular inquiry can be nothing more to us than a matter of speculation. But He had just uttered His tremendous denunciations against the obstinate unbelievers of that nation, closing with a lamentation of infinite pathos over Jerusalem, ending with these words: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he

that cometh in the name of the Lord!" That promise that at some time He would come doubtless fell upon their minds with great force and caused them to ask that question. To say to Jerusalem, "Your house is left unto you desolate," would be to them a dark and mysterious utterance, followed as it was by an intimation that some one at some time would come in the name of the Lord. In their minds there was no question but that that coming One would be their own Lord and Master; for they ask, "What shall be the sign of *Thy* coming?" In His discourse He mingled the then impending doom of Jerusalem with the long and troublous period during which that city should lie desolate and be trodden down of the Gentiles, as Luke tells us, and should so continue until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. So far the words of the great prophet are suggestive of trouble, conflict, and every form of opposition—violence without and corruption within—as the history of the Church from that day to this verifies. For eighteen hundred years Jerusalem has lain desolate under hostile heels, and is so lying at this moment. But so far in his answer there is no sure sign given by which men may know when the Son of Man shall come, and when they may expect "the end of the world."

What are we to understand by the phrase, "the end of the world"? The word here translated world does not signify this "terrestrial ball," as this planet is called in one of our hymns; nor does it mean the race of mortals who now inhabit this planet; nor is it, I think, the termination of the con-

ditions imposed by the Creator in Eden upon our race. The true sense of the word "world," as it here occurs, is "the age." It is so given as the literal Greek reading in the revised version. It means a period during which the world is passing through a certain state or condition. Geology teaches, and teaches truly, that this globe passed through a number of successive periods or ages before it arrived at a condition fit for man or for the more perfect animals. Before Christ came, the world of mankind passed through a preparatory age—not so much an age of religious conflict as of development. With Christ came the age of conflict—a struggle between light and darkness, and the battle has been long, because men loved darkness rather than light. But the light, nevertheless, has steadily gained upon the darkness, and will gain until it shall be seen and rejoiced in to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"What shall be the sign of Thy coming?" was the heaven-inspired inquiry of the disciples; and it is put on record that all believers may ask it. Jesus graciously gave them one sign, so plain, so clear, that none can mistake its import. Here it is. Let us put it in a separate paragraph, emphasizing every word:

"*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*"

In Revelation viii., ix., x., and xi., we read of seven angels each of whom sounded a trumpet. The sounding of six of them was followed by commotions and calamities, woe succeeding woe. But the sounding of the seventh marks a mighty change:

for "there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." I submit to the mind of the thoughtful Christian whether that which Jesus calls "the end" is not the same as the great event which is set forth in this symbol of the seventh trumpet? The pouring out of the seventh vial into the air, and which was followed by a great voice from the throne saying, "It is done," points, I believe, to the same thing of which He who spoke as no other prophet ever spake refers, when He says, "Then shall the end come."

Now let us look for a moment at these Apocalyptic proclamations, especially the first. It speaks of the kingdoms of *this* world—not of another. It speaks of kingdoms—not of a single kingdom. By the word kingdoms I would understand nationalities; but they shall be more drawn together than ever before; for they shall be under one supreme and divine Ruler, the King of kings. Satan, the usurper, whom Jesus Himself called "the prince of this world," shall be deposed and shut up in prison (see Rev. xx. 1–3). It will simply be a change of administration—a great and good change, it is true, but nothing more. The outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh, spoken of by Joel, will then take place. God declares that His people shall be willing in the day of His power; whereas Jesus complained in the days of His flesh that His people would not come unto Him that they might have life. My impression is, that in that great day when the seventh angel shall sound his trumpet, and

when He who purchased the world with His blood shall take possession of it, there will be nothing miraculous, according to the ordinary sense of that word; but that the usual tenor of human life will flow on; that all that is useful will be preserved; that all the appliances of human skill and research will continue to be used; but nothing upon which may not be inscribed "HOLINESS TO THE LORD."

This great revolution will come suddenly—"not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." It will be the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, preceded by the terrors therein mentioned. Zephaniah (i. 15) speaks in strong language of the same tremendous event, saying: "That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness," etc. (The reader will please read in this connection this short prophecy from beginning to end.) Although the predictions of Zephaniah had a partial fulfilment in the history and experience of Judah, in the same sense that the great prophecy of Joel had a partial fulfilment on the day of Pentecost, yet the main burden of both is yet to come. I say this with entire confidence; for Jesus Himself tells us that when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring," etc. (Luke xxi.). The two predictions must relate to the same period of wrath, perplexity, shaking, overturning, and breaking to pieces, which we are told, in the vigor-

ous language of the Apocalypse, will succeed the pouring out of the seventh vial into the air, accompanied by a great voice from the throne saying, "It is done!" "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great" (Rev. xvi. 18).

I have made but a few citations from the many which might be made of the terrors and glories of that day when "the prince of this world" shall be deposed—that day which Jesus calls "THE END," and which will come as soon as His Gospel shall be proclaimed as a witness to all nations.

This world has witnessed many changes which men call revolutions—the putting down of one rule and the setting up of another; but what are they compared with that one which these prophetic Scriptures foretell? "Now," said our Saviour, when He had recovered from a shuddering and shrinking view of His near approaching agony, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me" (John xii. 31). For a moment He had been sorely troubled in view of what He knew must transpire in a few hours; but with Godlike power His mind darted across centuries of conflict to that day of which we are speaking, and instantly His utterances were changed from those of perplexity and horror to words of triumph, joy, and exultation. His Father lifted the dark curtain which then enveloped Him, and showed Him the travail of His soul—"the joy that was set before

Him"—and He was satisfied. That was one of the darkest hours in that life of grief and sorrow through which our Lord was called to pass; and we may not err if we look at that record as prophetic of that dark and fearful day which is to mark the close of this age of conflict through which His Church will be called to pass—"the end," of which Jesus spoke. It will be midnight when the cry shall be made, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" Hence that mysterious and startling question: "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

LOVE AND WRATH.

THE New Testament is all aglow with the love of God. Salvation, in all its fulness and freeness, is but an expression of that love. Jesus in one single sentence expresses this love in words which go to the utmost verge of the power of human language: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life; for God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." This harmonizes with the words of Paul in Romans v. 8, "God commendeth His own love toward us," as it reads in the revised version, "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "Let us love one another," says John, "for love is of God." Then in the same chapter he says with triumphant emphasis, "God is love," and a few verses further on in the same chapter he repeats the glorious truth in the same words.

These are but a few among many texts which might be cited in proof of that great and boundless love that pitied dying men. It was in this light that our Saviour and His apostles held up the Eternal Father to the contemplation of sinful men, so that they, seeing that He loved them, might be drawn to Him by the same great moral force. Hence the

apostle John says, "We love Him because He first loved us." As soon as a sinner is thoroughly convinced of this fact, his love in return will be awakened—he will be drawn. In this light we see the beauty and force of Christ's words, "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me *draw* him." No man ever was or ever will be *driven* to Christ. Jesus, when He contemplated His near approaching agony, exclaimed, "I, if I be lifted up, will *draw* all men unto me." In all these great sayings the same attracting force is spoken of; and Paul, in Romans ii. 4, tells us that it is the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance.

But do not the Holy Scriptures speak much of the wrath of God? Certainly; for we read, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. i. 18). This sentence is so comprehensive that we need not quote any more. But what is wrath? We know what it is in an angry, enraged, vindictive, and vengeful man; and I fear that many ascribe the same unholy and repulsive passions to the ever blessed God who loved and pitied our sinful race when there was none among them that did good, no, not one.

Here is the condition of one who is under the wrath of God, as it is set forth by our blessed Saviour in that loving discourse to His disciples on the night in which He was betrayed: "If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned." Calm and gentle as the words are, a more terrific text is not to be found

in all the Bible. Think of a poor dependent creature being cut off from the only source of life and blessedness, and cast away to wither, die, and be utterly consumed, in the fires of his own sinful nature, which nothing short of atoning blood can quench. God called, but the man refused. Even God Himself, with all His pity and loving-kindness, could not avert the dreadful consequences. He tried to draw him to the Saviour; but he would not be drawn. To drag him or drive him into the relation of a child would be impossible. Such a thing would be an outrage even to reason. The force that was exerted upon him was sufficient; for thousands and millions have been drawn and gladly came; but he would not come; therefore he must "eat of the fruit of his own way, and be filled with his own devices."

Among the saddest things found in the dark places of the earth, where the "Glad Tidings" have not penetrated, are the painful offerings to imaginary beings who are supposed to delight in suffering, but who are utter strangers to love, and whose wrath must be propitiated at whatever cost. Were these poor creatures to attempt to write the character of their god in three words, as John does, they would say, "God is wrath." Blindly it may be, but truly, they feel that they are sinners; but knowing of no Saviour, they are driven to these wretched expedients.

This deprecatory worship seems to be a part of that darkness which covers the earth. It is universal in heathendom; and during the dark ages it penetrated deeply into the Christian Church. Dur-

ing the apostolic era, and for several centuries afterward, the love of God in Christ was the inspiring theme of the discourses and the songs of the Church. Paul, in all his writings, says little of wrath, but much of love, and much of the joy which springs from a persuasion of the love of Christ. See the eighth chapter of Romans, how full it is of love and joy and triumph. The study of that chapter will show us fully what John means where he says: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John iv. 18). The word fear in this place means dread; not that filial reverence which is so often in the Scripture called fear. Paul seems to have been full of joy when he wrote to the Philippians. "Finally, my brethren," he says, "rejoice in the Lord." Then he calls them his "dearly beloved and longed for, his joy and crown." Then, a little farther on, he calls upon them to "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice." In writing to the Galatians he places joy in the second place after love among the fruits of the Spirit. It is a matter of deep regret that this grace, this fruit of the Spirit, is not more dwelt upon, more insisted upon, and more manifested among Christians of the present day in their worshipping assemblies and in their social life. True joy, when deep and intense, is among the most solemn emotions of which the human mind is susceptible, as far removed from levity and frivolity as anything can be—far more likely to bring tears than smiles or laughter.

Some fragments of Christian song have come down to us from the early centuries. The earliest

of which I know anything is ascribed to Clement, Bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 217. It breathes the language of strong faith, fervent love, and filial obedience. It speaks of joy; but there is not a word of deprecation. Five hundred years later John of Damascus gave to the world his "Hymn of Victory," one of the most triumphant and joyful sacred songs that ever was penned. It is an echo in music to Paul's triumphant shout that "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Even the spirits of just men made perfect might sing it.

RECOGNITION IN HEAVEN.

THAT the redeemed, who were acquainted with each other in this life, will recognize each other in heaven is generally believed by Christians, and I think there is good ground for such a belief. It is certainly a pleasing thought, and a very consolatory one, when we are called upon to part with friends of whose salvation we feel assured. But there are some who have doubts on this subject. They wish that it were true, and with more or less assurance they hope it is true, but yet have doubts about it. To such I propose to offer some reasons why we should accept this pleasant hypothesis as true, and as one on which there ought not to rest the shadow of a doubt.

We are so constituted that Memory is the basis of our own personal identity, and that that alone secures the continuity of what we call individuality. But for that we should be new persons every day, every hour. All behind us would be utterly blank. Without it we could learn nothing either of ourselves or anything else. Without memory even our very existence would be impossible; for no knowledge at all could be retained. In the first hour of infancy there is no knowledge whatever; but there is something—we may call it what we please—that is capable of receiving impressions. These impressions are remembered and stored up.

Then the first glimmer of thought is awakened. Other impressions pour upon the opening mind from all quarters, and the combination of these impressions, stored up in memory, is what causes the mind to grow and become the marvellous thing which it is. Take gravitation away, and all nature would disintegrate and return to its original chaos, or nothingness, which in the physical sense is the same thing. So, take memory away and the rational being relapses into nonentity or annihilation.

Our mental make-up consists of that which we have gathered and are still gathering from our surroundings. The mother at whose knee we sat or knelt contributed much. Our juvenile associates came in with their share. Our teachers with theirs, as did everybody who ever exerted any influence upon us whether for good or evil. So did the observations we made and the books we read, and so did the Spirit of God reach us through His word. All these accumulations entered into and made part of the *ego*, and go to make up what each mind recognizes as his individual self. Memory fastens them to us and makes of them component parts of our own individuality; and they can no more be separated than can a particle of matter be put outside of the law of gravitation. It is what is remembered that makes up the mind; and to cease to remember those things which contributed to the making up of that mind would be the beginning of a process which would not end short of total annihilation.

But what is the testimony of revelation on this subject? The Bible does not set out to prove

the existence of God, but takes it for granted. So it seems to do in the question before us. Dives was rich, lived in luxury and enjoyed his "good things." Lazarus was poor, and found some kind of shelter at the rich man's gate. The latter showed him a little cold and careless kindness by allowing him to be fed with the broken fragments of his own luxurious board. In process of time both these men died. While the poor man's spirit was borne by angels to Abraham's bosom, that of the rich man was consigned to a place of torment. Looking abroad from his awful prison he saw Lazarus resting in the bosom of the father of the faithful, *and knew him.* Jesus doesn't say in so many words that He knew him; but his petition to Abraham proved that He did, for He names him. Very likely he gave very little thought to the poor man while he lived, but he had not forgotten him, nor had the greatness of the change in their respective conditions rendered it impossible to recognize him, neither did the vast distance which then separated them. But his petition was unavailing. Then his memory began to work in another direction. He remembered his five brethren still on earth, and probably living as he had lived; and the dread that they should come and share his own wretched fate prompted him to beg that Lazarus might be sent to warn them. With this picture of a future existence from the lips of Him who knew all things in heaven, earth, and hell, how can we doubt the mutual recognition of saints in glory?

But again: Jesus went up into a mountain with Peter, James, and John. While there He was

transfigured and received a visit from Moses and Elijah, both of whom had been centuries in heaven. They talked with Jesus, but we have no account that they spoke to the three disciples. No doubt but the latter were thrown into an ecstasy; for Peter, with his characteristic impulsiveness, proposed to build three tabernacles, "one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." How did he know who these glorified strangers were? We may, I think, rest assured that there are powers of recognition in our natures yet undeveloped, and of which we have as yet no experience, no conception. While I believe without a shadow of doubt that in heaven we shall know the friends whom we knew in this life, I also believe that we shall know all who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, no matter when or where they lived in this world. My belief is that no introductions will be needed there.

"WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM."

NEVER did man write words more wonderful than these of the beloved disciple in the third chapter of his First Epistle. No language can be more simple or more easily understood; none could convey a stronger impression of the glory and blessedness which Christ bestows upon His ransomed ones. They shall be like Him, therefore "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." He is the Son of God; they are sons of God also. In Him the Father is well pleased; and in this infinite complacency they are in their measure sharers—they are "joint heirs with Christ."

But, as Paul expresses it, "one star differeth from another star in glory." So is it with the saints in this lower world of trial and conflict, and in that higher world of rest and glory and triumph. In the starry heavens one star differs much from another in glory. In heaven this difference in degree of glory will doubtless be greater still, and this difference will consist in greater or less measure of that likeness of which John speaks. This likeness will consist in moral qualities rather than in intellectual gifts—the widow's two mites will outweigh and outshine the splendid offerings of those who cast in of their abundance.

Christ carried His peculiar glory from earth to heaven. Here He lived as the great Teacher and Exemplar of His people. Here He was made

perfect through obedience to the law which they had violated, and thus worked out their robe of righteousness. Here He was slain. Here He washed the robes of His people and made them white in His blood. Here He was made perfect through suffering, and found His glory in that suffering; and here He cried, when the hour of His great sacrifice had arrived, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." In this world He seems to have gathered all the glory which clusters around His name; for it is of what He did here that the multitude of the redeemed and the angelic hosts sing over there. Here He labored and suffered, and thus it behooved Him to suffer, as He Himself expressed it, and to enter into His glory.

In this world, in this life as a mortal man, the peculiar character of Christ as the Saviour and Mediator of His people was developed and shone forth. In that brief life He was made perfect. Here He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." His spirit and His character are clearly and strongly set forth in the four gospel narratives which the pen of inspiration has given us; and it is in this life that, by following in His footsteps as they are marked out in those inspired histories, the likeness of which John speaks must be impressed upon us. In heaven that likeness will be made more or less conspicuous in the measure that our lives here are conformed to the pattern which He set us in His life while here.

Ponder carefully the words of the great apostle in his first epistle to the Corinthians (iii. 10–15). Turn to them at once. In that passage we learn that it is possible to be saved, and yet suffer loss—possible to be saved, "yet so as by fire." "Suffer loss"? What loss? The soul is saved; what is lost? That loss is the loss of the glory and blessedness which flow from that likeness of which we are speaking—not the absolute, but the relative loss of it. Such souls will be saved; they will be in heaven; they will, in their feeble measure, be progressive like all the rest; but they will be stars of faint light in the great galaxy on high. We know not that this loss which such saved ones suffer will be to them a subject of never-ending humiliation and regret; but as the Scriptures call it loss, we can hardly imagine how it can be otherwise. Those who spend this life in building wood, hay, stubble upon the true foundation, instead of gold, silver, precious stones—those who are more diligent in laying up treasures upon earth than treasures in heaven, or in gratifying self in any way, will not bear much likeness to Him who saved them from the wrath to come by the sacrifice of Himself. Everything that is unlike Christ, whether it be in an irritable or unforgiving temper, or a spirit of self-indulgence either in food, apparel, amusement, or worldly honors; or in uncharitableness in any form, whether in harsh and censorious judgment of others, or in the withholding of alms from the needy, mars or obliterates the likeness of Christ in the soul of the believer, and subjects him to the loss of which the apostle speaks in the passage be-

fore referred to. All such shall suffer loss, even though saved—but "scarcely saved," as Peter expresses it.

How many Christians live as if all they aimed at was to get to heaven—nothing more. If they can barely escape final condemnation it is enough. Their meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light gives them no trouble. If they can be washed in the atoning blood of Jesus they are content; but how much of the image of HIM who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and whose whole life was a labor of love, is enstamped upon their souls and shines out in their lives is not a matter of much solicitude. Their loss is great, even though they should be saved. But how fearful is the danger of running so close to the border of perdition!

We must be like Him in the present life: for here it is, and not in heaven, that that likeness must be enstamped upon us. Heaven will develop that likeness gloriously; but we have no reason to hope or believe that it can be originated there. The Redeemer did His work here in this mortal life; so must we. Here men beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. They saw Him going about doing good. They heard Him say, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish His work." They saw Him scattering benefits and blessings wherever He went; and they witnessed the meekness and patience with which He bore the contradiction of sinners. They heard Him pray, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." In all these we are able to see

and hear what those who were with Him at the time saw and heard; and in these we are able to understand what He was like, and by following His example we acquire that likeness—we become like Him. It may, it is true, be in so feeble a degree that the world can not see it; for John tells us that the world knew Him not, and again He tells us, "the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not."

But the genuineness of that likeness is not found in the brightness with which it may shine out in this world. Brilliant natural talent may cause that. But it is found in its highest perfection in the humble, childlike saint, however destitute he or she may be of natural gifts. Hear what Jesus says: "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." And in what does this greatness consist, if not in being like Him? It will astonish many of us, when we reach that brighter and better world, to see the image of Christ shine out in glorious and beautiful fidelity from the faces of many of His obscure ones whom we knew in this life, but whom we hardly thought it worth while to notice. They came to and went away from the house of God in unobtrusive humility and meekness, and their garments bore witness that they were like their Saviour in another respect—they were poor.

But let no one imagine that there is any merit in poverty and obscurity apart from the graces of the Spirit; neither is there anything in the gifts of genius or of fortune that necessarily hinders the formation of Christ's likeness in the souls of such

as are thus favored. Still it is true in a large measure that "God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith."

How wonderful is the grace which has made us capable of bearing Christ's image at all; for of all the glory that can be put upon creatures this is the highest and the best. In this the righteousness of Christ is not only imputed to us, but imparted to us; and in receiving that likeness we become necessarily partakers of the divine nature, as Peter says we are. It doth not yet appear what we shall be. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived what we shall be—how great, how glorious, how happy—but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him. It is enough. All conceivable limitations of the greatness, glory, and blessedness of those who shall be thus made like Him are removed. This likeness, as before observed, must be enstamped upon us in this life by regeneration; and having this, how careful ought we to be not to deface and mar it by anything contrary to the spirit, the precepts, and the example of Christ as set before us in the gospel narratives.

"We shall be like Him," says John, "for we shall see Him as He is." And then he adds, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."